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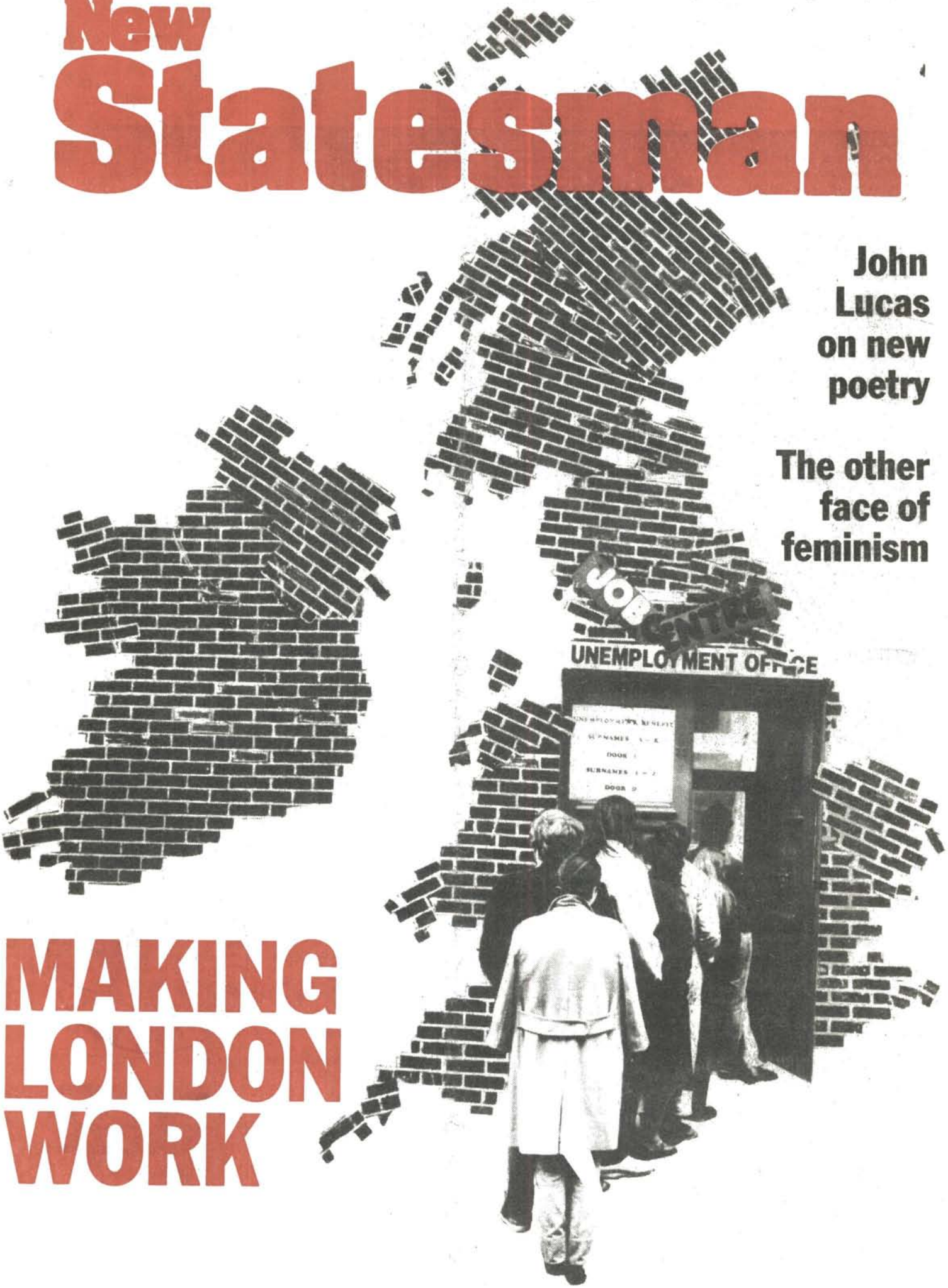

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Making London work
Stephen Marks assesses the value of the GLC's new employment strategy p.8

Whose spring?
Gustaw Moszcz reports from Poland a year after martial law was imposed p.17

A new Daks suit
John Lucas reviews new poetry by Peter Porter and Carolyn Forché p.21

The other face of feminism
Liz Heron removes the muffler from the socialist-feminist voice p.12

Huge Steps
Stephanie Jordan on the Ballet Rambert past and present p.24

News: Democrat's debts; Viewdata in Libya; Nukes in Scotland; Private health in Peterborough; Peace protest in Italy pp.4-6
Peter Kellner: A leader for the Alliance? p.7
Mary Holland: Provisionals' election victory p.10
This England p.10
Geoffrey Bindman: Racial discrimination and the law p.13
John McIlroy: Breakaway trade unions p.14
Diary: Christopher Price p.16
Roger Woddis p.16
Diana Johnstone: Lost chances on the French left p.17
Jonathan Mirsky: Whatever happened to Mao's Red Guard? p.18
Bretécher p.19
Letters p.20
Peter Wilsher: Computers p.22
Shorter Reviews p.23
Grace Ingoldby: Fiction p.24
John Coleman: Films p.25
Hugo Williams: Television p.26
Benedict Nightingale: Theatre p.26
John Spurling: Art p.27
Weekend Competition p.28
William Boyd: First Person p.28
Solution to Crossword 1394 p.29
Salamanca p.29
Listings p.31

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New Statesman Vol 105 No 2715 1 April 1983

A public scandal

TO GIVE THE Prime Minister her due, she has done more to break the mould of British politics and political convention than the Social Democrats will ever achieve before they slip quietly below the surface of the Liberal Party some time after the next election. She created another crack this week with her decision to force through the appointment of Mr Ian MacGregor as chairman of the National Coal Board. It was a stubborn and a silly decision, taken by a politician who has come to think that getting her way is the same thing as good administration. It is of a piece with her decision to make Mr Leigh-Pemberton the next governor of the Bank of England.

In both instances she used her power of personal patronage to bulldoze aside consultative processes (and the views of others directly involved) in order to make overtly 'political' appointments. The establishment, which goes in such palsied terror of her wrath, must now realise that a future government of the Left is thus freed to play the game by the same changed rules. If Mrs Thatcher persists in destroying the established convention that in the matter of key appointments of a supposedly unpartisan kind the various interests directly involved are genuinely consulted, so be it. It opens the way to far more radical progress in judicial and civil service reform, in education, in police and prison matters, in economic planning and in furthering industrial democracy than any previous Labour government has been able to achieve.

But that is no short-term comfort for a thoroughly bad decision. Mrs Thatcher may be prepared to ignore the views of the Coal Board, the NCB management, Mr Scargill and the NUM, but she ought at least to ask herself why so many even of her own backbenchers have found the decision offensive. The reason is that it shows a total lack of understanding of large-scale industry and of management.

In making the statement about MacGregor in the House of Commons on Monday, the Energy Secretary made a passing reference to an article about the man's past industrial career, which appeared in the *New Statesman* on 18 March. It seems that Mr Lawson, however, cannot have read the piece very closely. For the brazen defence of the decision to spend a further £1,500,000 to secure another three years' public service in this country of a 71-year old American is centred on the claim that he had experience in building up 'the third largest coal mining company in the United States'. (It is in any case a fantasy world inhabited only by politicians in which one man alone can take full credit for the fortunes of a conglomerate as large as the American Amax Corporation; or for that matter hope to make some magical impact on an institution so large as the British nationalised coal industry.)

But in fact what our article was pointing out was that, if MacGregor had any reason to be particularly proud of his Amax record, it had nothing to do with coal. The Amax phenomenon in the 1970s was based entirely on the fact that MacGregor saw very early that a rare metal – molybdenum – would become the key to the manufacture of very high quality steels. By moving early, he established a dominant position in that market. As for coal, Amax's performance has been very mediocre. All but one of its mines in any case are 'open cast' and not underground at all. The claim, therefore, that MacGregor will be bringing valuable mining knowledge relevant to the NCB is wholly without foundation.

MUCH HAS RIGHTLY been made of the 'transfer fee' and other financial arrangements connected with the MacGregor contract. His banking partnership in New York, Lazard Frères, quite simply took the British government for a ride three years ago, when MacGregor was recruited as chairman of British Steel. It has now done so again. It is disingenuous to claim that Mr MacGregor has no personal interest in the 'transfer fee.' It goes to the partnership of which he is still a member. The circumstances surrounding the arrangement represent a scandalous use of public money and should be subjected to scrutiny by the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee.

Far more serious in the long term, however, is the damage that the appointment does to British industry and its management. That management is not so competent and confident that it can sustain such treatment. For what the MacGregor appointment in effect says is that in the government's opinion there is no one in the country up to the job of being chairman of the NCB. That is a patently ludicrous proposition. As a Tory MP, Sir William Clark, rhetorically asked Mr Lawson, if it was known that the government was prepared to pay out £500,000 a year to get the right man 'could we not have found *someone* in this country?'

The demoralising effect is not confined to the NCB. By every word and deed Mrs Thatcher communicates her view that publicly-owned industries are incompetently run and a drain on the economy. There is, as a matter of fact, no proof as to whether the public sector is better or worse managed than the private sector, nor any proof as to whether public sector industries are better or worse managed in other countries. Her position is, therefore, derived purely from ideology.

But, whatever Mrs Thatcher may want (and even if she gets another five-year term) this country, like every other in Europe, will still have a substantial public sector. Any responsible government would do what it could to raise the quality and the morale of those responsible for this sector. It would point out facts, such as that the NCB gets substantially less government subsidy per ton of coal mined than any other European producer; or that British Rail has one of the lowest costs per passenger mile in the world. All this has nothing to do with politics. It is a matter of common sense that an atmosphere of pride and achievement is more likely to improve performance than the daily and unjustified message from No 10 that there is no sympathy or hope for any nationalised industry that does not have a personal protégé of the Prime Minister as its chairman. □

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Democrat's debts

AFTER FIVE months' existence, the *Democrat* magazine – which was launched as the SDP-Liberal Alliance's answer to the *New Statesman* – is now insolvent. The paper's owners have debts of over £100,000, yet they are refusing to put the company into liquidation.

Among the creditors are the *Democrat*'s staff, contributors and printers, as well as the Department of Industry and British Telecom. Last weekend all but one of the telephones in the paper's office were cut off because the phone bill for the previous quarter had not been paid. Items of office furniture are now being repossessed.

The last issue of the *Democrat* appeared at the beginning of February. Since then, the paper's typesetters (who are owed £11,000) and its printers (who are owed £22,500) have refused to do any more work for the *Democrat* until outstanding bills have been paid.

Other debts include the £10,000 owed to the freelance journalists who have contributed to the paper, and £7,000 owed to the seven staff, including the editor. By far the biggest creditor, however, is the government, which gave the *Democrat* a £55,000 loan under its scheme for helping small businesses.

This loan was negotiated by Greg Thain, the *Democrat's* founder, a man who has a remarkable aptitude for starting magazines but is not always so successful at keeping them going. His first publishing venture, *Live Music Weekly*, collapsed soon after its inception. Then, in 1980, he founded an entertainment magazine called *AM*, which collapsed after three issues with debts of £30,000.

One of Thain's next magazines, *What Video?*, was bought from Thain by its printers, Riverside Press, in January 1981. Riverside Press later told *Campaign* magazine that they had bought *What Video?* 'to protect the money we were owed in print bills – almost £60,000. It would have been much better for us, in retrospect, to have accepted the debt and wound the whole thing up rather than take over what was an absolute financial disaster. The bad debts were absolutely astronomical – approaching a quarter of a million pounds'. Thain did not dispute this account.

Greg Thain had the idea for the *Democrat* in January 1982. He wanted to start it in the summer, but by June the magazine was still short of capital. The launch date was put off until September, and Thain approached Michael Golder, a Social Democratic businessman, for money. Golder became chairman of The Democrat Ltd, and led his fellow directors to believe that he could raise at least £200,000 without even a government loan. In fact, it now transpires, Golder's contribution to the company's capital was just £10,000.

When the editor-elect, John Torode, pulled out at the last minute, the launch date was postponed until October and a new editor, Dan Gillon, was hastily installed. Considering that it had been cobbled together at short notice by a new editor, the first issue was by no means discreditable. However, like the following issues, it was a victim of Thain's optimism. The circulation of 15,000 – while quite respectable for a new political fortnightly – was only half as big as Thain had expected. Advertising, too, was below Thain's grandiose projections.

In December, Thain resigned his post as publisher of the *Democrat* and went off to involve himself in three other new magazines – *What Diet?*, *What Finance?* and *What Investment?*

'What investment?' was also the question asked by directors of The Democrat Ltd. They had accepted Michael Golder's assurances that he could raise large sums of money. He is, after all, the main shareholder and chairman of Kennedy Brookes Ltd, a rapidly-growing company in the hotel and catering business (its group sales last year were £9.5 million). But the money never appeared. At Christmas the *Democrat* merged with another mould-breaking paper, *Alliance*, and became a monthly; but it was too late.

Golder is something of a politician. In the early 1970s, when he was working in the City as a Eurobond manager for Carr Sebag, he was adopted as Labour candidate for Windsor and Maidenhead, which he contested in the two general elections of 1974. In the 1979 election he was Labour candidate for Gloucester. Since the *Democrat* was launched, he has been chosen as the SDP-Liberal Alliance candidate for Gloucester.

If the *Democrat* does go into liquidation, it could prove politically embarrassing for the magazine's directors, three of whom are parliamentary candidates for the SDP: William Goodhart, a barrister, who has been selected for Kensington; Jim Daly, a former Labour member of the GLC (and a long-standing business associate of Golder), who is standing at Enfield North; and Golder himself. William Goodhart told the *NS* this week that, with hindsight, he thought the company had been under-capitalised and Thain had been 'possibly over-optimistic'. He added: 'I have no objection to the editorial content. I think there have been problems with management and financial control.' He agreed that the company could not pay its debts.

Dissatisfaction with these management problems caused three other directors to resign in February. They were John Torode, the SDP candidate for Saffron Walden, David Hughes, the Liberal candidate for Westbury, and Dan Gillon, editor of the *Democrat*.

Yet another SDP candidate, Clive Lindley, is now trying to organise a salvage operation.

Francis Wheen

Do you tango? Roy Jenkins & Michael Golder at the *Democrat* launch

Taking hacks for a ride

THIRTY BRITISH journalists were lured to Libya earlier this year as part of a strange plan by Online Viewdata Marketing (OVM) to promote itself to Libyans and Libyans to the rest of the world. OVM had contacted several newspaper and TV companies, including the BBC and ITN, promising to arrange hard-to-get interviews with Colonel Qaddafi and Robert Maxwell, the Scottish engineer recently sentenced to 12 years' jail in Libya.

OVM is not a familiar name in PR circles. The company is better known as a publisher of classified advertising on viewdata systems, although a number of their marketing ventures have been singularly unsuccessful (see *NS* 18 March). However, they have listed themselves in the Yellow Pages under the heading 'Advertising – Television and Radio' where Wanis Burwila, a businessman acting for the Libyan government, found them. Burwila, who had previously arranged an interview for Japanese journalists with Colonel Qaddafi, was asked to arrange this trip by Colonel Said Qaddafadan, a cousin of Qaddafi, who is said to head Libya's intelligence service.

As well as fixing the interview with Qaddafi, OVM had also offered to take Mrs Maxwell to visit her imprisoned husband. A spokesman for the BBC said one of the reasons he accepted OVM's credentials was that they seemed to know Mrs Maxwell's movements.

In fact, OVM has no special relationship with Mrs Maxwell. They merely rang her MP, Donald Dewar, whose efforts on her behalf had been reported in the press and asked him to put them in touch with Mrs Maxwell. Mr Dewar did because, having consulted the Foreign Office, 'we decided anything was worth trying.'

For the journalists, the trip with OVM began to go wrong before they left. Instead of flying to Libya on 3 January, they spent the day hanging around the Kensington Hilton waiting for their visas. As they were about to board the plane on 4 January, they were asked to sign a piece of paper agreeing to be invoiced by OVM for the trip. All but the journalists from the *Daily Telegraph* and Reuters reluctantly

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agreed. Once in Libya, OVM unexpectedly changed its name to World Media and its four representatives, including managing director Ivan Siou became producers, editors and cameramen (without cameras).

In Libya, there was no interview with either Qaddafi or Maxwell. Instead, the journalists were taken to the People's Congress. 'We were kept there about three hours. I didn't understand a word of it', said Jim McKillop of the *Glasgow Herald*. To their embarrassment, the names of their papers were read out and someone from 'World Media' proposed a vote of thanks to the Libyans – all of which was transmitted live.

Aware that the trip had been a fiasco, Burwila apologised to the journalists, and assured them the Libyan government had paid all their expenses. Nonetheless, in Britain, OVM invoiced all the newspaper and TV companies for the hotel, flight and a handling charge of £100. Though it seems unlikely OVM will get paid by most of the media organisations, they appear to be satisfied that they have fixed up a business deal for themselves in Libya. Mr Siou refused to say what the deal is, or to comment on any aspect of the trip.

Caroline Berman

More nukes for Scotland

A NEW US Air Force headquarters and a third British base for nuclear armed cruise missiles may come to Scotland following new studies and plans being prepared by the US Defense Department.

Analysts at the Washington Institute for Policy Studies reported this week that the United States Air Force is currently seeking permission to start a major new construction project at Prestwick Airport, near Ayr in Scotland. The new installation – to be known as the Rear Area Transportation and Relay Facility – would be the headquarters for controlling the movements of supplies from the United States to Europe in crisis or war.

Two United States military units – a Navy transport unit, and an office of the USAF Military Airlift Command – are already sited at Prestwick. It is an important staging base for military flights across the Atlantic. New building work planned at Prestwick includes extending the runway to cope with between 300 and 600 flights per day. The very high traffic levels anticipated, plus the enhanced military significance of the base in war, are likely to spark off considerable local protest.

There is a recent precedent for successful protest against aircraft noise at planned USAF bases. Residents of Newbury successfully prevented the government allowing the US to put a squadron of extremely noisy KC135 tankers at Greenham Common. But they got cruise missiles instead.

The new NATO air base at Stornoway, in the Outer Hebrides, is now under consideration as a cruise missile base, a US Department of Defense official admitted last week. He told the Sussex University Armament and Disarmament Information Unit (ADIU) that the so-called 'Tomahawk' missiles might be based there as part of a plan currently being prepared for the US Defense Nuclear Agency.

Codenamed GLASS – for Ground Launched Anti-Shipping System – the plan envisaged trying to bottle up the Soviet Navy and prevent ships or submarines entering the Atlantic through the Greenland-Iceland-UK gap – a so-called 'choke point'. Scottish-based missiles would be one part of such a system. The study is being conducted for the nuclear agency 'because of the nuclear component', a London-based US official told ADIU.

Publicity given to the GLASS scheme so far has concentrated on the use of conventional warhead type cruise missiles, launched from the land to attack Soviet shipping. But capital ships, such as a *Kirov* type cruiser, could be attacked with one nuclear cruise missile instead of five or six conventional types. There are obvious attractions for US planners in using nuclear warheads.

If cruise missiles were to be deployed in northern Scotland, the Stornoway base – where a NATO-funded pipeline and Hardened Aircraft Shelters are already under construction – would be a logical choice. A 1981 report on cruise missiles by the influential Washington-based Brookings Institution also proposed using Scottish-based cruise missiles to attack northern Norway if Soviet forces invaded.

ADIU researchers were told by US officials last week that any decision to deploy GLASS missiles ashore in Europe would only be taken after full consultation with the host country. There is no reason to suppose, however, that the British Ministry of Defence would raise any objections.

Duncan Campbell

MISCELLANY

Forever Young

If, as he claims, the BBC's next chairman first came to the attention of the powers that be when he headed a consortium that bid vainly for the breakfast TV franchise, then the man he has to thank is Sir Leo Pliatzky. For when Lew Grade put together Daybreak TV to bid for the franchise – in the desperate hope of finding some use for his surplus Elstree studios – the man he chose as its chairman was Pliatzky, the ex-Treasury mandarin who had just retired from being Permanent Secretary at the Department of Trade. The other members of the consortium found Pliatzky so difficult to get on with (and he found himself so out of sympathy with their approach to the franchise) that he was pushed aside just before the applications were heard by the IBA, and Stuart Young was put in as a last-minute stopgap. Incidentally, Stuart Young's standing at No 10 can't be harmed by the fact that his brother is David Young, the Thatcherite trusty who is now running the Manpower Services Commission.

Darlington despair

The *Northern Echo's* efforts to prevent a Labour victory in the Darlington by-election eventually provoked a protest to the editor from his own journalists on the eve of polling day. The complaint, signed by the paper's NUJ leader, Martin Skipton, was about a front-page lead story claiming that a Militant supporter had been seen canvassing for Ossie O'Brien. But this was only one of many efforts. When other newspapers ran MORI and NOP polls saying that Labour was winning, the *Echo* ran its own telephone poll – a notoriously unreliable device – saying that Labour was losing. On the day when Shirley Williams attracted 700 people to a meeting, the *Echo's* page lead was headlined 'SDP Packs Them In For Shirley'. When Michael Foot attracted 1,000 people to a meeting a few days later, the *Echo* managed not to notice.

An everyday story . . .

Fans of *The Archers* will know that feminism and unilateralism have penetrated the rural idyll of Ambridge. (It all started when Pat Archer cancelled the *Daily Express* and ordered the *Guardian* instead.) To celebrate, a group called Women for Life on Earth has produced a badge with the inscription 'Nuclear Free Ambridge'. The picture on the badge looks like an everyday farmyard scene, but Women for Life tell us that it is, in fact, a full-scale allegory: the picture 'represents the Mother Hen (BBC) in distress when the ducklings she has hatched (*The Archers*) take to water (Women's Action)'. Ah yes. The badges, as well as some rather splendid posters from peace

camps, are available from Thalia Campbell, Glangors, Ynyslas, Borth, Dyfed. (Send SAE for catalogue.)

. . . of titled folk

On the other hand, if you're not a Woman for Peace, why not join Women for Defence, Lady Olga Maitland's new group? Lady Olga told us that she had felt there was more to Greenham Common than met the eye: 'So off I toddled. The first day it was absolutely pouring with rain, the next day it was swirling with snow.' What did she make of the women there? 'I think their sincerity is very moving,' she said; however, 'they have been deliberately misled with a lot of wrong information'. She set out to put them right. The inaugural meeting of Women for Defence was held at the house of her parents. Lord and Lady Lauderdale, five weeks ago. 'We're anxious not to be associated with the Conservative Party, although of course we are all Tory women,' she said, winningly. 'We're making a plea – "A Pound for Peace" – to pay for our expenses. All sorts of people have been handing in their little pound notes. I think we're going to get an enormous amount of support.'

Counting their money

One of the longer-running scandals of local government is about to end. Some accountants who act as auditors for local authorities are also awarded lucrative consultancy contracts for the same authorities; in some cases the contracts are not even put out to tender. However, after pressure from our own Chris Price (among others), the Audit Commission on Local Government Finance will soon ban accountancy firms from doing consultancy work for councils where they already act as auditors. The accountants aren't too happy about losing this profitable sideline, but they can take heart: the Audit Commission will also recommend a huge increase in audit fees. The justification for this is that accountants will have to spend much more time on local councils' new 'value for money' audits. In other words, local authorities will have to pay more money to obtain value for money. Clear?

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Doctors' share in profits

ALARM THAT private hospitals in which local doctors own shares might prove to be the pattern of private medicine in the future has already been realised in Peterborough. In January, the private Fitzwilliam hospital opened its doors to its first patients, the culmination of a move first taken by local NHS Consultants in 1980.

Consultants in Peterborough had feared that hostility to paybeds jeopardised private hospital practice. Together with the property company, Conder Midlands Ltd, a subsidiary of Conder International, they proposed a scheme for a private hospital in the town. They raised a promised £500,000 by selling 50p shares to founder shareholders, who included at least 43 local doctors, most of them consultants. They then approached Sir Franklin Braithwaite, chairman of the Peterborough-based printing machinery firm Baker Perkins, to be their chairman. He agreed, and his financial director, Colin Joyce, also joined the new company as a director.

According to Mr Joyce, the investment by the doctors was merely the 'trigger' to pull in the big City investment. Most of this comes from Community Hospitals plc, a company which channels City money into private medicine. Apart from Baker Perkins, the other major shareholder is BUPA, who have provided the manager – Mr Fellows Freeman – for the hospital.

Baker Perkins' £25,000 shareholding in the Fitzwilliam should be regarded not as an investment but as 'a charitable donation', says Mr Joyce. If the company lost its £25,000 it would hardly show up on the balance sheets. What mattered was that Baker Perkins had a name in the town for giving to good causes, and supporting private medicine is a good cause.

The doctors are clearly more concerned about guarding their investment. A memo written from the Medical Advisory Committee before the hospital opened stated that the shareholding doctors did not want non-shareholding doctors to have the right to admit patients to the Fitzwilliam as quite a few of them had bought shares because they believed they would not otherwise be allowed to use the hospital. Management, however, felt it was a 'commercial necessity' to keep the hospital as full as possible. The compromise proposal was that all newly appointed consultants in Peterborough would be encouraged to become founder shareholders, and other doctors be charged a fee for every one of their patients admitted to the Fitzwilliam.

Conflict between management's need to make a profit and other interests has also arisen. Although private patients pay for the privilege of being treated exclusively by consultants, junior doctors from the Peterborough District Hospital have been asked to provide the weekend cover. The BMA recommended rate for this is £250. They were offered £120 and according to a minute of a meeting in February, this was already taking the hospital over budget. The junior doctors have now been offered £180. Management has also decided it is too expensive to provide patients with identifying hospital numbers, despite the protests of Dr Fairham, and the objections of the NHS laboratory technicians who provide pathology services, and fear specimens and blood will get mixed up. To save money, the hospital was using taxis to transport clinical waste in dustbin liners until, following protests by NUPE, they hired a van.

When asked about NUPE's criticisms, Dr Brian Hackman, a consultant, owner of 10,000 shares and director of the Fitzwilliam said 'God Bless 'em' – and conceded that it has kept them on their toes. A consultant accused by NUPE of giving his NHS secretary's telephone number to his private patients had been 'naughty' and quickly ticked off for instance. He rejected NUPE's charges that the opening of the Fitzwilliam had encouraged the shareholding doctors to put their Fitzwilliam patients first. Despite the high fees charged at the Fitzwilliam, the patients received no better medical attention he said. What they got was the 'family atmosphere' and hotel service.

Mr Fellowes Freeman confirms that it is the 'associated paraphernalia' that patients are buying and denies that the function of the hospital is to make a profit. It exists he says because 'many of our patients didn't like paybeds – they didn't know what standard of care they would get and they were frightened that industrial action would be directed against them.'

Sarah Benton

Expelled from Comiso

A GROUP of women peace campaigners, who were deported from Italy following the arrests at the Comiso cruise missile base in Sicily on 11 March, have arrived in London to publicise their case. They claim they were brutally treated by the Italian police, and argue that their deportation may have been illegal under EEC law.

The small town of Comiso is next to the site of what will be one of the largest cruise bases in Europe: 112 missiles will be installed there later this year. Some 30 peace women from several countries, including England, Ireland, Germany and Holland, had maintained a presence at the site since last December. Immediately after the arrests on 11 March, their camp was bulldozed, and their tents, sleeping bags and other belongings were burned or confiscated.

'I was dragged back and forth through a muddy ditch like a paintbrush', said Peggy from Holland, as she described the police reaction to the women's second attempt to blockade the entrance to the site on 11 March. (Two days earlier, police had cleared a sit-down blockade with 'a lot of violence' in which a Swiss woman had her arm broken.) This time, they claimed, it was worse. Women were dragged by their hair and thrown in ditches. There was another broken arm.

But the women refused to go, and after three hours the arrests took place. Twelve women (and 2 men, who were not part of the blockade and were later released) were bundled into a van and driven to the police station at Ragusa. Detained overnight, they were all charged the next morning with 'forming a road-block', an offence (introduced in 1948, to stop Sicilian peasants expropriating landowners' estates) which carries a sentence of 2-12 years – or 1-6 years if you block a road singlehanded.

The 12 were held for six days ('we weren't allowed a change of clothes, a phone call, or even a toothbrush') and then charged with the additional offence of trespass. Unlike the first charge this one didn't require an immediate trial. 'We were insisting on a trial, but it was obvious they just wanted to get rid of us as quickly and quietly as possible', said Veronica from Ireland. Finally, on 16 March, they were issued with deportation orders, to take effect immediately, on the grounds that they hadn't registered with the police when they arrived in Italy (though some of them had) and that they were 'penniless' (though they all had enough money to live on). Under armed escort they were flown via Palermo to Rome, and thence to their home countries.

If the Italian government were hoping to disperse the peace camp 'quietly' it seems they will be disappointed. The women's case is to be raised in the Italian parliament by Radical Party MPs and others, in the European Parliament, and in many of their home countries, including Britain, where Tony Benn and Jo Richardson are raising it with the Foreign Office. The women themselves have lodged an appeal against the deportation order, and are insisting on their right to return and stand trial.

Malcolm Imrie

March council by-elections

Liberal tally

Date	Place	Lib vote	Lib %	Result
3/3	**Broxbourne***	1060	51.9	LIB hold
3/3	**Oadby & Wigston***	444	39.4	Con hold
3/3	**Woking***	502	48.6	LIB hold
3/3	**Tyne & Wear***	946	26.6	Con hold
3/3	**Halton**	643	41.1	Lab hold
10/3	**Sutton***	1500	59.0	LIB gain (Con)
10/3	**Enfield***	569	19.2	Con hold
10/3	**Southwark***	1584	56.6	LIB gain (Ind Lab)
10/3	**Gloucestershire***	1055	41.5	Con hold
10/3	**Stevenage***	678	46.4	LIB hold
10/3	**Sunderland***	120	8.7	Lab hold
17/3	**Surrey***	1816	49.4	LIB gain (Con)
17/3	**Merseyside***	2578	65.7	LIB hold
17/3	**N.E. Fife**	675	50.0	LIB gain (Con)
17/3	**Merseyside***	1112	29.3	Con gain (Lab)
24/3	**Hastings***	590	40.1	LIB hold
24/3	**Tayside***	819	33.3	Con hold
24/3	**Oxfordshire***	583	30.8	Con hold
24/3	**Wakefield***	1231	33.9	Lab hold
24/3	**Hertfordshire***	996	26.5	Con gain (Lab)
24/3	**Cumbria**	799	44.4	Con hold
24/3	**Dundee***	84	10.4	Con gain (Ind)

** Seats also contested by both Con & Lab.*

SDP tally

Date	Place	SDP vote	SDP %	Result
3/3	**Wellingborough***	667	25.9	Lab hold
3/3	**Greenwich***	821	32.7	Lab hold
3/3	**Sutton***	535	51.3	SDP gain (Con)
3/3	**Sefton***	1260	38.3	Lab gain (SDP)
10/3	**Huntingdon***	396	36.0	Con hold
10/3	**Birmingham***	1418	24.2	Con hold
17/3	**Halton**	1817	45.1	Lab hold
24/3	**Devon***	1118	30.4	Con hold
24/3	**West Yorkshire***	3005	33.6	Lab hold

** Seats also contested by both Con & Lab.*

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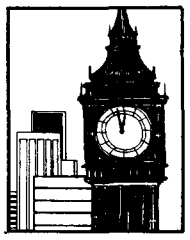

PETER KELLNER, Political Editor

David Steel, Roy Jenkins and the ghost of Jeremy Thorpe

THERE WAS A MOMENT in the February 1974 General Election campaign when Jeremy Thorpe claimed he could be about to become Prime Minister. Three opinion polls published the weekend before polling day showed the Liberal vote climbing sharply. One poll, by Marplan, put them at 28 per cent. Another, by NOP, led to a front-page headline in the *Daily Mail:* 'JUMPING JEREMY'. Thorpe, said the story and the poll, was the most popular of the party leaders.

At the Liberals' Monday morning press conference, Thorpe announced his preparedness for high office: 'I want to make it clear that the Liberal party is in this election, first and foremost, to form a government.' Liberal strategists believed that this claim would add further momentum to Liberal support: the more people who thought the Liberals could win, the more would actually vote Liberal. By polling day the Liberals were promoting the slogan: 'If you want a Liberal government you can have one'.

This episode produced one minor and one major cautionary message. The minor message is that the public is not always right about the qualities of party leaders. The major message is that, contrary to widespread belief, it may not benefit the Liberals (or, today, the Liberal/SDP Alliance) to be perceived as a potential party of government. Certainly, David Steel is convinced that those high-flown claims in the final days of the February 1974 campaign were counter-productive and cost the Liberals something like one million votes. Many people were willing to cast a Liberal vote as a protest against the two other parties; but being invited to vote *for* a Liberal government was quite another matter.

Participants in the present debate about who should be the Liberal/SDP Alliance's 'Prime Minister designate' could do worse than reread the tea-leaves from 1974. There is little doubt that Roy Jenkins cuts the more persuasive figure as potential Prime Minister: my suggestion is that, from the Alliance's point of view, this is *precisely* the wrong reason to select him as PM-designate. Rather, it is the boy David whose very inexperience in government is most likely to garner votes; what the Alliance needs is not a governmental candidate but, as it were, an anti-governmental candidate – a man who seeks to cut the old, discredited big boys down to size, rather than one who aspires to compete in their squalid league.

This strategy, of course, would present an immediate problem. Ever since it was formed almost two years ago the Alliance has insisted that it is an alternative government. It need not have made this claim. It could have attempted, publicly and specifically, to obtain the balance of power. By insisting instead that it is after the big prize, it would find it difficult now to withdraw to any lesser ambition. Yet as the months go by the volatility and character of the Alliance's support makes such a change necessary, even urgent.

CONSIDER THE EVENTS of the past few weeks. Up to the week of the Bermondsey by-election there were few signs of an alliance revival. Opinion polls and local council elections (see *NS* 4 March) told much the same story: Liberal/SDP support had stabilised at a level too low to hold out great hopes of a major electoral breakthrough.

Between Bermondsey and Darlington, the polls found a marked revival in Alliance support. This was also reflected in council by-elections. In 27 three-cornered March contests (see list facing), the 75,000 votes cast were distributed as follows:

Lib/SDP	27,487	36.3%
Conservative	24,437	32.2%
Labour	22,246	29.3%
Others	1,653	2.2%

As during last autumn, the Alliance did better, and the Conservatives worse, than their opinion poll ratings implied. And, as during last autumn, it has been the Liberal half of the Alliance that has turned in the more impressive performance. During March, Liberals won nine out of 22 seats contested (including five they were defending). Two weeks after Bermondsey the party captured one of the council wards in the same constituency from an 'O'Grady independent', with a share of the vote almost identical to that which propelled Simon Hughes to Westminster. Labour came third, behind the 'O'Grady independent', with just 8 per cent of the vote, and the Tories fourth with 3 per cent.

On 3 March the SDP also benefited from the 'Bermondsey factor' by gaining its first council seat since last August. But on the same day it scored a rather less welcome first. In Sefton council in Derbyshire it suffered its first true by-election loss. A ward that it won last May reverted to Labour. (Previous SDP 'losses' had taken place where the previous councillor had been a Labour defector rather than an SDP victor. In our tabulations of election results we compare with the previous election result, and discount any subsequent change of party by incumbent councillors.)

Further evidence of Liberal supremacy within the Alliance comes from the pattern of seats fought. One year ago Liberals and SDP candidates were contesting by-elections in roughly equal numbers. Last autumn we noted that Liberals had started fighting almost twice as many seats as the SDP. During the winter the gap has widened further. Between December and March the Liberals fought 52 seats (winning 20), while the SDP fought just 16 (winning one).

Darlington is bound to exacerbate the growing tensions between the Liberals and the SDP. Never before has a Liberal or Alliance surge been followed so quickly by such a poor result. In six English by-elections following Orpington in 1962 the Liberals performed better than the SDP did this time in Darlington; that series of contests included William Rodgers's election as the Labour MP for Stockton. His Liberal opponent then took 26.9 per cent of the vote. In 1973, the *lowest* Liberal share in English by-elections was 36.5 per cent in Manchester Exchange.

The main significance of individual by-elections, however, lies not in the precise interpretation of local political opinion, but in the impact they make on the public beyond. Just as a *Sunday Times* MORI survey taken immediately after Bermondsey put the Alliance comfortably into second place, a *Weekend World*/ORC survey the day after Darlington relegated the Alliance once more to a poor third. No wonder Roy Jenkins looked more than usually contrite when he was interviewed by Brian Walden.

What Jenkins did not wish to acknowledge was that the SDP's failure in Darlington may have been more fundamental than the weakness of the local candidate. For the first time since Shirley Williams's victory at Crosby in November 1981, the Alliance entered a by-election as favourite – a mood created partly by Bermondsey, and partly by the early rogue NOP poll. Instead of being converted by a last-minute revulsion towards the Labour and/or Conservative parties, voters had time to contemplate the nature of their loyalty to the SDP. And the more time they spent, the less they liked what they saw.

Which brings us back to the lessons of February 1974. Protest politics, rather than the quality of its policies, provides the Alliance with whatever appeal it possesses at any moment. Try to convert the essentially spontaneous character of a protest vote into an appeal to take you seriously as an alternative government, and you risk losing a slice of that vote. That is why Liberals would be right to resist Jenkins's claim to lead the Alliance into the next general election. □

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UNEMPLOYMENT

Making London work

Stephen Marks examines a brave new project from the GLC's Popular Planning Unit, and investigates its implications for the country

THIS WEEK the Greater London Council is issuing 50,000 incitements to the working people of the capital to take the future into their own hands. That, at least, is the view of the authors of *Jobs for a Change* – the pamphlet being launched this week by the GLC's Popular Planning Unit, calling for London's workers to bombard the GLC with proposals for alternative products, workers' co-operatives and the raw material for a London based, not on profit, but human need.

Born of the vision of the Lucas stewards, out of the creaking bureaucracy of County Hall, this unlikely combination of industrial utopianism and municipal socialism could well turn out to be an expensive flop. It could also – just – play a part in turning the ideological tide against Thatcherism's hitherto unchallenged vision of the future. Which of the two it does could depend as much on the reaction of the capital's trade unionists and socialists as on anything decided by the GLC.

After a delay caused by legal problems and bureaucratic inertia, the GLC's industrial strategy is about to 'take off' about halfway through the controversial left-wing administration's term of office. It marks a clear break with the traditional approach of local authorities to job creation – the old approach relying on promotion and incentives to induce private employers to move to one municipal patch rather than another.

London certainly needs some determined action on jobs. The jobless total, publicly displayed and updated on the roof of County Hall, now stands at above 400,000 – three times what it was when Thatcher came to power less than four years ago. The GLC's Economic Policy Group, set up just a year ago, and the newly-functioning Greater London Enterprise Board point to some of the initiatives they have been able to take, even before their strategy is fully operational.

At the Willesden plant of Associated Automation, 300 skilled and semi-skilled jobs were due to go when the parent company, part of GEC, threatened to close the factory and move the work elsewhere. The stewards decided that GEC, with £1,000m in the bank, could sit out any industrial action, so the GLC was called in. After three-way talks with the stewards and GEC, the GLC agreed to buy the site and provide working capital for a co-operative, which now employs 180 workers on an 18-month contract. The firm continues to produce telephone equipment for GEC.

Meanwhile, the co-op's design team, many of whom stayed on from the old company, are working with GLC advisers, and with researchers in London colleges, to devise new products which can keep the co-op going. These include special telephone-based alarm systems which local authorities could use for old people's homes. Chances are good of finding markets to safeguard the future of the existing workforce (60 per cent of them women) and take on more.

AT THE AUSTINSUITE furniture factory in the East End, 120 out of 400 jobs were saved when the GLC bought the factory from the receiver for £1.25m and provided an 18-month subsidy, of £20 a week per job, to a private buyer who agreed to the GLC's terms. These include guaranteed work at union rates for the duration of the grant, and steward and trade-union representation on the board of the company to see that the terms are kept. The GLC is also talking to the furniture workers union (FTATU) both to work out ways of intervening elsewhere in the industry and to make sure that aid to one company does not lead to loss of jobs in competitor firms.

But trade unionists have good reason to be suspicious of co-ops which subcontract work from former employers; as well as of worker representatives. GLC policy makers would reply that the cases where they have intervened so far are just the first instalments of a comprehensive strategy aimed at showing that there is a socialist alternative to monetarism.

An economic policy group, headed by Robin Murray, is working on a series of strategic studies of industrial sectors and geographical sub-regions aimed at identifying where the GLC (together with unions, shop stewards and community groups) should be intervening in advance to save and create jobs, instead of waiting for redundancies to be announced. Areas where work is already under way include the electrical and electrical-engineering industry and, geographically, East London. The keynote of this intervention is that unused resources of labour and premises can be brought into use to meet needs not identified by the market, often using human-centred technologies which are actually more productive than those which remove skill from the operator. Where possible, this will be used as an opening to encourage forms of industrial democracy and social ownership, or enhanced trade union power.

This approach is reflected in the investment guidelines of the Greater London Enterprise Board – which operates with a £20m annual budget and can make aid available up to £500,000 without reference to the Industry and Employment Committee (as long as it keeps within investment criteria already agreed by the Council). Instead of conventional market criteria, GLEB grades its support according to such factors as the extent to which the project involves municipal or co-operative ownership; agreements with unions, including investment policy and working conditions; number of apprentices, blacks and women employed; whether jobs are created in areas or trades where unemployment is particularly high. In addition, the basic subsidy of £20 a week per job created is justified on the basis that an industrial worker in London creates an average of £160 in value added per week, stimulates a further £40 of London production and generates £70 for the Exchequer.

IN PRINCIPLE, this is an impressive vindication of what Industry and Employment Committee documents call 'the economics of human need', but as long as the argument remains in those documents it is of little use to any but the fortunate few (given the scale of London unemployment, they will never be more than a few) whose jobs are directly saved or created with GLC money. What is more, the most impeccably socialist sectoral and regional strategies will remain nothing more than expensive intellectual playthings for the Economic Policy Group's generously-salaried researchers if not based on workplace and community experience, initiatives, needs and power.

Exactly, say the County Hall jobs strategists, and point to the Popular Planning Unit, which is responsible for the *Jobs for a Change* pamphlet being sent to trade union branches, shop stewards' committees and trades councils throughout London. With

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vivid graphics and punchy prose, it highlights London's jobs crisis and the GLC's aims. It pledges support for all those fighting for jobs, and urges them to approach the GLC for assistance in any strategy they may adopt, whether in drawing up workers' plans and community plans, or in taking more conventional industrial action.

Committee documents on 'popular planning' show an awareness of the more obvious pitfalls and dangers. 'It is not enough to put out a call for popular plans,' says one report. 'The council must provide resources to strengthen the workplace and community organisations through which such plans could be developed and campaigned around.'

Hilary Wainwright, who heads the unit, recognises the danger of 'sapping the energy of trade union and other groups by assuming they must orbit round the GLC'. She claims the educational material being prepared by the unit will 'encourage those involved to consider how best to use GLC or GLEB support to strengthen their power *vis-a-vis* management and the government'. That way, she argues, the strategy will create something that can survive the Labour GLC itself.

One aspect of this is work being done with trade-union officials and shop stewards to encourage workers to investigate their own companies and anticipate management moves, using County Hall researchers to piece together information and establish an 'early warning system'. This, it is hoped, can help anticipate job threats and build up a workers' picture of the London economy which can provide the basis for alternatives.

GLC aid, in conjunction with the unions, could include subsidising research on alternative products to strengthen the stewards' hands, or funding bulletins to build contact with workers in other plants. While apparently modest, this is perhaps as far reaching in its implications as any of the better publicised GLC/GLEB initiatives. It is an eloquent comment on traditional Labourist approaches to local government that nothing like it seems to have been tried before.

ONE EXAMPLE OF the 'popular planning' approach in action is the moves to develop – from meetings between local tenants organisations, direct labour department stewards and local councillors – a 'Jobs from warmth' campaign. Tenants surveying their own heating needs, and trade unionists providing unemployed skills, are working to develop local and London-wide plans for job creation from insulation programmes. The GLC has already funded a local worker in Islington, assisting a community project for modernising the heating on one trial estate.

GLC economic policy group members have also held meetings with members of childcare projects from all parts of London, to discuss ways of helping the development of childcare cooperatives – not just as an exercise in job creation, but also as a small but real step towards equal opportunity for women in the workforce. Mike Cooley, formerly of the Lucas Aerospace Shop Stewards, is working at GLEB on the development of a 'technology network' linking the human and material resources of London's polytechnics, to put them at the disposal of those preparing workplace and community plans.

Of course, designs or prototypes of alternative products do not solve the real problem of control over investment decisions. But, as *Jobs for a Change* puts it, the demonstration that an improved technique or design is technically possible 'is a powerful argument for the resources to be made available on a large scale to those who desperately need it. It puts those with the power and the money to do something about it, in an awkward and exposed position.'

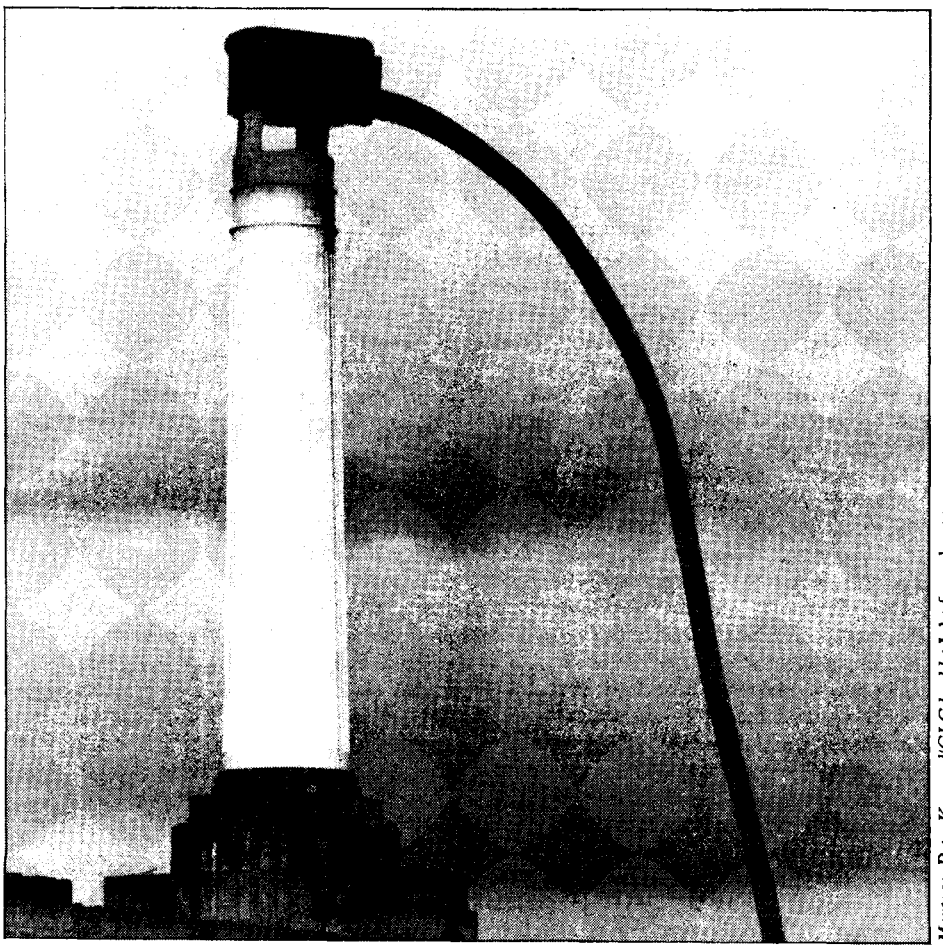
Now down to earth. In reality, none of this, in itself, is more than utopian tokenism. The GLC has no powers to direct the London economy, which itself cannot be insulated or separated from the national, or world economy, and the crisis which has them in its grip. Popular planning, though a fine idea, is in danger of involving no more than a thin layer of trade union and community activists, while having little impact on the rate at which their members and neighbours join the dole queues. The regular Popular Planning Forum – two have been held already – bring together the workplace, trade union and community groups the GLC is working with. But they are hardly mass gatherings.

GLC policy makers readily admit that the industrial strategy cannot itself reverse the tide of unemployment in London. But, they say, it will show that there is a socialist alternative. But which socialist alternative does the GLC exemplify? Is it a return to the methods of the National Enterprise Board, or the implicitly revolutionary conception of an explosive generalisation of the ideas behind the Lucas workers plan?

The question is pertinent. Hilary Wainwright co-authored *State intervention in industry; a workers' inquiry* (Spokesman) – a critical study, sponsored by trades councils, of the conceptions behind the NEB. But Alan McGarvey, managing director of the GLEB, was previously divisional director of the NEB's small businesses division. The same ambiguity is evident at a national level, in the joint TUC-Labour Party economic programme, which talks of popular planning in what is clearly the context of national tripartism between the TUC, the CBI and the state.

AT NATIONAL-GOVERNMENT level, that ambiguity cannot but be resolved one way or another. And for a future Labour Government to resolve it in a different way to the last one would require a combination of pressure from below and determination at the top, unprecedented in any previous Labour administration. At the Greater London level, however, the ambiguity can be sustained longer, precisely because the GLC initiatives can only be exemplary. Arguably, therefore, the facilities offered by the GLC could and should be taken up by workplace and community activists, to provide tangible evidence of an alternative to Thatcherism.

The Government's ideological strategy, disturbingly successful so far, is to associate every form of public initiative with bureaucracy and manipulation, and to play



Montage: Peter Kennard/GLC booklet Jobs for a change

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on subliminal guilt feelings about 'paying one's own way' to reinforce market-oriented policies and present them as the only workable option. But the alternatives – calls to vote Labour, or exhortations to militant struggle (with the details of any alternative left to 'after the revolution') – need practical-utopian evidence that 'we can run things ourselves', and that putting social need before profits *does* make economic sense. That is the best reason for the capital's socialists and trade unionists to make the most of the opportunity offered by the GLC. Without that response, the best hopes of the County Hall policy makers will be lost in their own Kafkaesque corridors.

And if that does mean applying one's imagination to problems of production in an economy still dominated by capital, the risks may still be less than those of running away from the problem. As Antonio Gramsci told Turin shop stewards in 1919: 'So to those who object that by this method we are collaborating with our opponents, with the owners of the factories, we reply that on the contrary this is the only means of letting them know concretely that the end of their domination is at hand, since the working class is now aware of the possibility of *doing things itself* and doing them well.' □

Jobs for a change *costs 90p and is available from newsagents and bookshops*

NORTHERN IRELAND

Provisional victory

Mary Holland analyses a recent by-election result

THE VILLAGE of Carrickmore, situated 17 miles from the Irish border in County Tyrone, is no stranger to political controversy. Its fierce republican traditions mean that at one time or another most Irish political leaders from Parnell on have spoken here. In 1969 when Bernadette McAliskey was elected to the House of Commons she held one of her largest rallies in Carrickmore, supported by Conor Cruise O'Brien on one side of the platform and other, more traditional Republicans on the other side. More recently, the village attracted the sharp edge of Mrs Thatcher's tongue when it was sealed off by the IRA for the benefit of *Panorama's* cameras.

Last week, over-shadowed by the other by-election in Darlington, a political event took place in Carrickmore which has gloomy implications for the government's present policy in Northern Ireland. In a by-election to the local council the Provisional Sinn Fein candidate topped the poll with 56 per cent of the votes. The more moderate Catholic Social Democratic and Labour Party, which had previously held the seat, was beaten into third place with 16 per cent of the vote.

There are several aspects to this contest which merit more attention than it has so far received in the British press. The previous incumbent, an SDLP councillor, resigned in protest against his party standing in the election to Jim Prior's assembly, although the SDLP promised not to take up any seats and have maintained this boycott. The by-election took place at a time when many hoped the SDLP had received a major boost to its fortunes from the announcement by the Irish premier, Garret Fitzgerald, that he had agreed to set up an all-party forum to discuss Irish unification.

It was the first time that Provisional Sinn Fein had contested a local government seat in Northern Ireland. Their victor, 21-year-old Seamus Kerr, is to take his seat in Omagh Council. This is a radical break with Republican tradition and one which signals the on-going debate within Sinn Fein about whether it should consider dropping its abstentionist tradition. It also underlines the party's determination to become fully involved in community politics in preparation for next year's local elections. Sinn Fein knows very well that this kind of activity at local level was the bedrock on which the SDLP built its support and which enabled it to destroy the old Nationalist Party.

It has been argued that Carrickmore is a special case and that if the Provisionals could not win a seat there they might as well forget about their new-found interest in electoral politics. One of their best known assembly representatives, Danny Morrison, has a full-time constituency office in the village and during the campaign the full resources of the Republican movement were brought in to help Sinn Fein. From the Provisionals' point of view it was also a useful trial for the British General election, when Mr Morrison stands a very good chance of taking the mid-Ulster seat previously held by Ms McAliskey.

For all these reasons the Provisionals' victory last week has been well noted in Dublin, if not at Westminster. The contrast between the Sinn Fein campaign and the SDLP's was summed up by the northern editor of the *Irish Times* as being 'youth versus middle age, working class versus middle class, enthusiasm versus weariness'. The enthusiasm does not seem to have been affected by the fact that the provisional IRA shows no sign of relenting in its campaign of violence against locally recruited part-time members of the Security Forces.

The growth of support for the Provisionals in the north, particularly among the young, is now a source of major concern to the Irish government which sees it, quite rightly, as a threat to the stability and institutions of its own state. Dublin is particularly angry that the British government has not viewed this threat in the same light and that it seems reluctant to regard John Hume's Social Democratic and Labour Party as the only political bulwark against the IRA.

It is this concern which accounts for the recent flurry of political activity in Ireland, Europe and the United States, designed to try and halt the Provisional Sinn Fein bandwagon and claw back popular support for the SDLP. In America, the Irish Foreign Minister, Peter Barry, was joined by prominent Irish/American politicians in denouncing the traditional St Patrick's Day parade in New York because of the choice of Michael Flannery of NORAID as the Grand Marshal. However, despite the boycott of the parade by the Irish government and other Irish organisations, it is unlikely that much hard core support for the IRA will have been lost.

The decision of the European Parliament to set up a working party to look into Northern Ireland's political and economic problems has been hailed here as a personal achievement for John Hume. But by far the most important initiative taken to help the SDLP's credibility with Catholic voters in Northern Ireland has been the bi-partisan endorsement, by Garret Fitzgerald and Charles Haughey, of the request for an all-Ireland political forum to draw up a blueprint for Irish unity. This forum will be open to democratic parties on both sides of the border who expressly renounce violence – i.e. it will exclude the Provisionals. Unionist parties in the North have been invited but have already given the forum the thumbs-down, denouncing it as part of an international conspiracy to push Ulster Protestants into a united Ireland.

So far the British government has been cautious in its reactions to the idea of such a forum, contenting itself with re-affirming the traditional guarantees that there can be no change in the constitutional status of Northern Ireland until the Protestant majority wants it. This contrasts sharply with the Prime Minister's angry reaction to the decision of the political committee of the European Parliament to pursue its parallel investigations into the problems of the North. It may be that there is now a desire to repair Anglo-Irish relations, which have been practically non-existent since the Falklands crisis, and even a more realistic attitude to the problems which now face the SDLP in fighting off the political threat from Provisional Sinn Fein. It could after all be a cause of considerable embarrassment if, as Dublin now fears, the Provos were to win three and possibly four seats at Westminster in the next general election. □

THIS ENGLAND

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□ A congregation at Halesowen, West Midlands, are being asked to include football referees in their prayers for the month. The Rector of Halesowen, the Rev. Christopher Atkinson, says refs have a very difficult job, and need praying for. Also on the prayer list are librarians and the Confederation of British Industry. – *Daily Telegraph* (Mrs David Weeks)

□ Mrs Sue Charman talked for so long in a public telephone box, ignoring the pleas of a queue of people to finish her call, that they trapped her inside by propping a concrete slab against the door. She had to dial 999 to get police to release her from the box in Thorney Road, Emsworth, Hants. – *Daily Telegraph* (James Scott)

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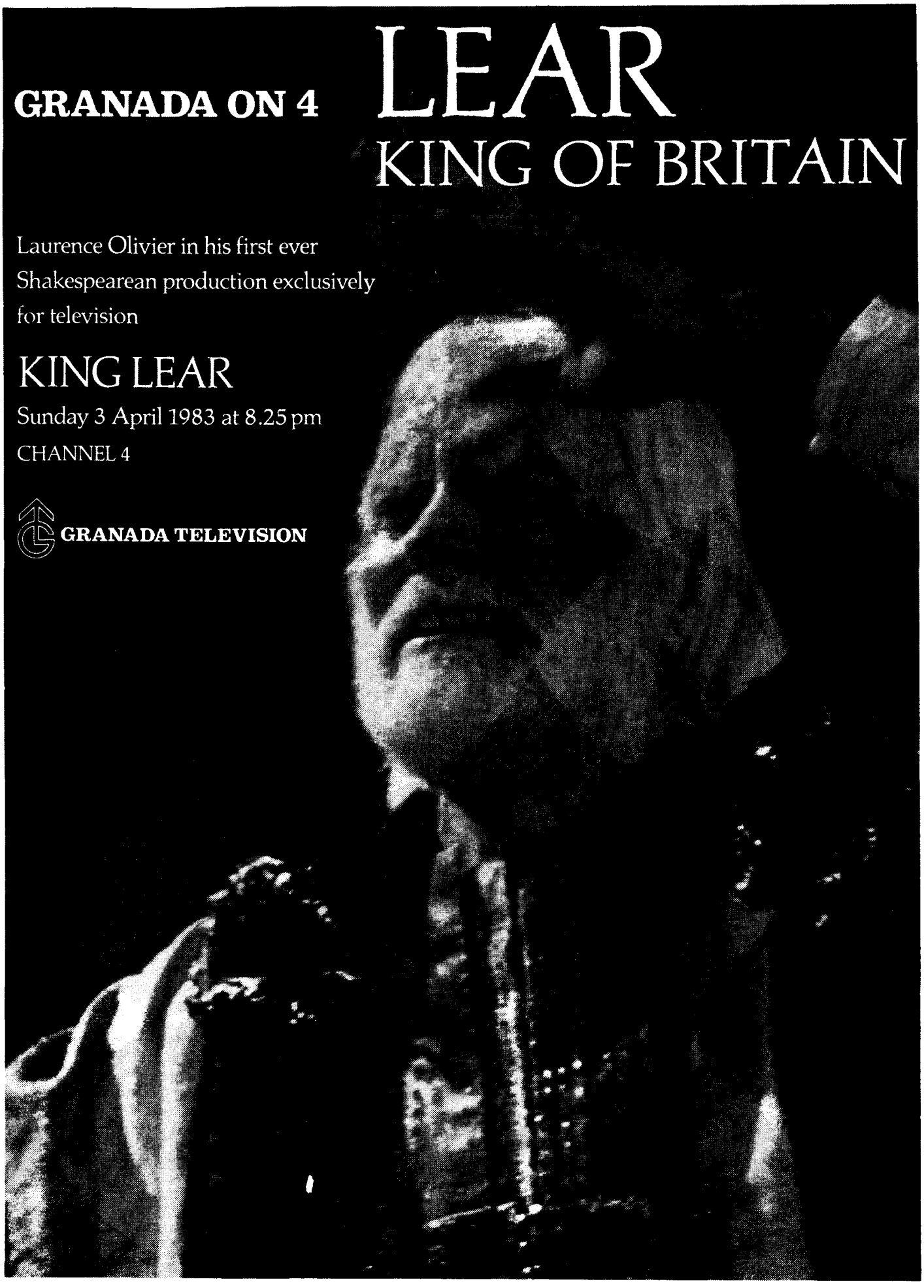

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Sisterhood re-examined

Is feminism driving itself into a ghetto? Socialist feminist Liz Heron puts the case for a reassessment of priorities, assumptions and strategies within the women's movement

LAST YEAR WAS TRULY a year of reckoning for women's liberation. Betty Friedan, in *The Second Stage*, wrote its epitaph. Histories were compiled – *Sweet Freedom* and *The Spare Rib Reader*. Doubts were raised about women's ultimate capacity to be independent from and equal with men – summed up, glibly and obtusely, in a book called *The Cinderella Complex*. Some looked back in celebratory vein, others more sceptically, but there was certainly a pervasive mood of conclusiveness. The balance sheets were being audited and the end of an era chalked up.

Once, 'Women's lib' was too pressingly dramatic to be let off the media agenda. It had high profile visibility and, even when the anti-feminist brickbrats came thick and fast, as the opposing theories attracted publicity and attention, they still kept the pros and cons implicitly to the fore. 'Post-feminism' has lowered the curtain on all that. Boredom has set in.

What is a backlash bang in the United States is more like a whimper of indifference here, but the underlying political and economic reasons are not that different, nor are the damaging effects on women's lives and living standards. So, is the women's movement dead, or at any rate is in its final throes? Has the single-issue focus of the women's peace movement replaced it? Have the gains and achievements of the past decade and a half made its concerns obsolete or less urgent? Or is it too much of a luxury in the grim face of recession?

I don't believe that any of this is accurate. The claims of women's liberation must inform the priorities of any broad movement for social transformation – tensions or no tensions. What has changed is the character of the women's movement – so much so that it's time we unpacked some of the contents and took a critical look at what's in

the feminist holdall.

One of the reasons that feminists are reluctant to do this is the concept of sisterhood. Like comradeship and solidarity, it's a word to conjure with. It can magically evoke the things that bring women together in common cause, and it can mean a powerful assertion of strength. Yes, if it represents unity in the pursuit of shared goals, sisterhood *is* powerful; but not if it is a paralysing shibboleth and a guilt-inducing barrier to open acknowledgement of what can be profound differences.

'Sisterhood' was challenged as long ago as 1976 by Juliet Mitchell and Ann Oakley. They indicated the dangers of overemphasising lifestyle as political practice, and pointed out that:

> When the present phase of the women's movement established itself in the second part of the '60s, there was a need for a unifying ideology while ideas were being worked out or rediscovered. 'Sisterhood' served the rhetorical purpose of political under-development; it was a useful rallying-cry. But its implications were not thought out and it seems to us now to mask both an absence of any real unity beneath it and to ignore the highly problematic relationship that in itself it implies.

That 'absence of any real unity' is all the more acute now. There has been no National Women's Liberation Conference since 1978. In the mid-seventies there was still a broad movement whose different tendencies would gather together and map out some common ground, as well as marking out their differences. But, while the fragmentation of the movement has continued, there's less sense of shared purpose.

This process of splintering into ever smaller fragments echoes the pattern followed by the first wave of feminism in the early part of this century. It might then seem historically inevitable that feminism should become a plurality of feminisms. Yet while for some time there's been widespread awareness of just how far those differences go, 'sisterhood', with all its moral undertones, still inhibits the kind of honesty that's needed for many women to pursue what they see as their priorities with any confidence as feminists. If rape, pornography and male violence have become the pivot of feminism at the expense of other issues, it is only because feminism, in a public sense, has come to be represented by one particular perspective. Many of us who don't share it, in particular those of us who see a necessary connection between feminism and socialism, no longer have a voice or a clear identity within the women's movement.

There have been repeated attempts by socialist feminists to challenge the views of anti-pornography groups such as WAVAW, who see pornography as proof of and fodder for 'womanhatred' and implicitly propose an idea of male sexuality along the Victorian lines of the beast with uncontrollable urges. What socialist feminists have advocated, instead, is the need to understand sexuality in broader and more complex terms. The response is a storm of rhetoric that's resolutely blind to the arguments offered. Worse still, in some quarters, this has developed from a position that asserts, with relentless circularity, the irrelevance of such arguments, to another that seeks to silence them in denunciatory fashion.

The move has taken a variety of forms; examples include the picketing of a study conference open to male as well as female participants (with the latter denounced as 'not feminists') and calls for a ban on a film about pornography which uses pornography sequences (deemed by some campaigners as unfit for male eyes, by others as unsuitable even for women to see). Meanwhile, the campaigners themselves are on record as organising pornographic slide shows – consumed as visual aids to the stimulation of rage, hence free of the corrupting influence that they're judged to exert over others. The danger is seen to lie in the exercise of critical faculties and intellectual curiosity.

THERE IS THE CRUX of the problem. Underlying the crusading emphasis on pornography and male violence is a hostile refusal to engage with existing social and sexual relations in ways that can lead to change. It is a politics of retreat – into a ghetto im-

heo housing emergency office

UK'S EMPTY HOUSES AND WAYS OF USING THEM

A one-day Seminar on Wednesday, 20 April, 10.30am, at 157 Waterloo Road, London SE1. Sessions include: co-op homesteading, empty listed buildings, flats over shops, counting the empties. Fee £35 including lunch. Details and bookings: Roland Jeffery, 01-633 9377 ext 54

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passe where women's moral superority is proclaimed and pitted against the male enemy. Heterosexuality is rejected, not only on personal grounds, but in the cause of 'political lesbianism,' which insists on lesbianism as the only option for all feminists. It amounts to a political retreat for feminism, despite a very public and vocal presence, since it has lost sight of the need to understand women's oppression in terms of social and economic conflicts of interest. Its logic is that, since men are so essentially irredeemable, the only better world would be a world without them. Its language is that of repression and reaction.

Sadly, 'sisterhood' also founders on the rock of self-righteous paranoia, when failure to sympathise with this outlook provokes accusations of betrayal – levelled at other feminists. Guilt is brought into play and becomes the central dynamic of disagreement. Definitions of feminism itself become prescriptive. It used to be an umbrella term for all the women's movement's diverse elements – a feminist could be any woman who recognised the specific oppression of women as a social group and saw the need to change that – but that openness is gone and there's a new orthodoxy: feminism as a primary emotional commitment strictly to the female sex.

What it amounts to is a reduction of the idea that 'the personal is political' to its literal absurdity, rather than using it to extend the conventional meanings of politics, as it did with the emergence of the contemporary women's movement.

At such a depressing distance from the libertarian principles that were so much at the heart of the original impulse for women's liberation, and with the urge to analyse and understand the mechanisms of women's oppression frequently blocked by the tyranny of emotionalism that holds men as objects of contempt, it's no wonder that so many women feel displaced and dissociated from what remains of the women's movement.

One response would be simply to turn our backs on autonomous organisation and allow a diluted feminism to be absorbed, *faute de mieux*, into the politics of the left. But that would be to surrender much that has been fought for. There have been enormous shifts in consciousness at different levels of society. It's necessary to defend what has been gained, as well as to make further advances.

But the ideological tide is turning and, if the struggle for women's liberation is to mean something vital and positive to the majority of women, it has to engage in a supportive way with the realities of their lives and everyday experiences. It has to offer the prospect of change for the better, and acknowledge that it can be achieved through cooperation with men, even though women still need to struggle for independence. The utopian vision that linked the transformation of social and political institutions with the transformation of personal relationships needs to be regained. It's really time for us to begin again to assert what *we* mean by women's liberation and how we can achieve it. □

DISCRIMINATION

Not good enough

Geoffrey Bindman on race relations and the law

SIKHS WERE NATURALLY jubilant at the victory of Gurinder Singh Mandla, this month in the House of Lords, over the headmaster who refused to admit him to school if he wore a turban. It is now clear, as was always intended, that Sikhs are protected from discrimination by the Race Relations Act. The definition of 'racial group' is no longer to be restricted by the archaic and discredited mythology of shared blood.

The presence among the Law Lords of some who are willing to interpret the Race Relations Act constructively is welcome, but the Mandla decision leaves many weaknesses untouched which are more the fault of Parliament than the judiciary.

Gurinder's claim was of indirect discrimination: no pupil at the school was allowed non-regulation headgear and it was an unintended consequence of this rule that observant Sikhs were not admitted. Indirect discrimination was first outlawed by the Race Relations Act 1976, in the hope of ending the wide range of institutional practices adverse to minorities which could not always be ascribed to overt racism. Although individuals, like Gurinder, have the right to complain of indirect discrimination, it was assumed that the major effort to uncover it would be made by the CRE using its strengthened investigatory powers.

There have been very few complaints of indirect discrimination by individuals because they stand to gain very little. Compensation for indirect discrimination is excluded by the Act where a racially discriminatory impact is unintended. That rules out virtually every indirect discrimination case and it is unreasonable to expect the victim to go through the ordeal of legal proceedings to get no more than a change of practice for the benefit of others.

Furthermore, the definition of indirect discrimination excludes important situations where minorities are disadvantaged. The discrimination is not unlawful unless it results from the application of a requirement or condition. Many members of minorities are put at a disadvantage because the lack of certain qualifications or experience is held against them in comparison with others. Mr Perera, a Sri Lankan barrister, complained that in dealing with his application for appointment as a legal assistant in the Civil Service, the selectors weighed against him his lack of practical experience as a barrister in England and gave no weight to his several years in practice in Sri Lanka. The Court of Appeal held that preference for English ex-

Mobil

Two centuries ago the Redcoats left the Big Apple – but not for good.

Starting in April, Albion is back in force with an arts festival called 'Britain Salutes New York'. HRH The Prince of Wales is patron.

Mobil is playing a major role in this friendly reoccupation of an erstwhile colony. The company that carried 'The Six Wives of Henry VIII' and a score of other British TV series across the Atlantic will be sponsoring a more rarified view of the Tudors: 'Holbein and the Court of Henry VIII', drawings from the Royal Collection at Windsor.

The exhibition – in the historic Pierpont Morgan Library on Madison Avenue – promises to be one of the major attractions of the festival. And so, with help from Mobil, an English king will reign in New York once more – albeit temporarily.

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perience was not capable of being indirect discrimination because it was a mere preference and not a requirement.

The CRE, by supporting the Mandlas and some others, has exposed some important areas of indirect discrimination – in one case, the refusal of a Liverpool firm to employ people from Liverpool 8 (the district including Toxteth) was held to be unlawful discrimination against a black applicant from that area. In other cases, arbitrary English language tests have been stopped, where the demands of the job did not include the level of proficiency being tested.

THE MOST EXTENSIVE indirectly discriminatory practices are those which limit knowledge of job opportunities in such a way as to exclude racial minorities. Where those already employed are predominantly white, the likelihood is that recruitment by word of mouth will exclude black job seekers. Similarly, recruitment through particular employment agencies or schools may produce a disproportionately large number of applications from one particular group. However, the definition of indirect discrimination in the Act makes it uncertain that the law will bite on such practices.

Furthermore, the efforts of the CRE to challenge indirectly discriminatory practices have made little headway because its investigatory powers are hedged about with procedural restrictions which the courts have made even tighter whenever they have been asked to interpret them.

Much of the blame for the complexity and weakness of the procedures lies, ironically, in the decision to give the CRE its own enforcement powers where it finds unlawful discrimination. Instead of having to present a case to an independent tribunal or court, the CRE can issue a 'Non-Discrimination Notice', imposing on the recipient the duty to stop discriminating. This procedure has proved a disastrous mistake. While the victims of discrimination may not always see the CRE as their champion, the Act gives it a partisan role which cannot effectively be combined with a quasi-judicial role. Parliament inevitably failed to resist demands for complex safeguards and rights of appeal which are written into the Act and the courts have been receptive to demands for even greater strictness.

The mass of time-consuming and expensive procedural litigation which has bogged down the CRE throughout its life, and promises to continue, will only be prevented by setting up a separate discrimination tribunal which could be given much greater powers without arousing the same opposition. Such a tribunal must, of course, have members who understand discrimination and have the constructive attitude surprisingly emerging among the Law Lords. As has been demonstrated by the much more effective anti-discrimination legislation in the United States, the tribunal must have power to direct changes in policies and practices towards equitable distribution of jobs and other benefits regardless of race. The 'Non-Discrimination Notice' procedure has failed. It should be abandoned. □

INDUSTRY

Chips off the block

John McIlroy examines the splinter trade unions

ARE WE IN FOR a spate of breakaway trade unions? Acrimony over last year's protracted NHS dispute produced at least two alternative organisations. Last month the breakaway Ministry of Defence Staff Association (MODSA) announced its recognition by the government as bargaining agent for the staff of the Royal Observer Corps – a tiny but symbolically important breakthrough for a body which began life in August 1981 as part of the reaction to the lengthy Civil Service dispute. Members of the National Association of Theatrical, Television and Kine Employees at Granada TV's Manchester HQ have voted to leave their union and seek another after a series of disputes with their national executive. Fleet Street's 1,400 electricians are disenchanted with the EEPTU and the condemnation by EEPTU General Secretary Frank Chapple of discussions that they have had with the print unions has led SOGAT chief, Bill Keys, to promise protests at the TUC.

On 2 March 100 railway workers gathered at Derby to form the Federation of Professional Railwaymen, the first breakaway amongst manual workers for some years. The impetus for this organisation (motto – Cooperation not Confrontation) came from last summer's strikes on British Rail, specifically from the NUR's decision to suspend some 12,000 members from benefit for failing to obey union instructions. Like MODSA, its constitution strongly echoes Norman Tebbit's recent Green Paper on Union Democracy. It provides for secret postal ballots, elections for representatives, a requirement for a secret postal ballot with a 60 per cent majority before industrial action is called and no links with political parties. The Federation already claims 1,000 members and hopes at least to double that by May.

Almost 50 breakaways and new unions have appeared since 1945, but the fate of the vast majority has been speedy extinction or lingering impotence, caught between the desire of employers to maintain stable collective bargaining and good relations with the established unions and the ability of the latter effectively to close ranks against newcomers. The Glassworkers Union, set up in 1970 in St Helens in the aftermath of the bitter Pilkingtons strike on the basis of dissatisfaction with the then GMWU, was a typical example. Turned away by the TGWU and the chemical workers union, Pilkington workers were quickly crushed between management and their former organisation.

The group which is advising the FPR, the Association of Polytechnic Teachers, until recently seemed to confirm this pattern. Established in 1972 because of dissatisfaction with what is now NATFHE's wages policy, the APT found success elusive, but it has now made a breakthrough in terms of recognition and grown to 23,000 members. Of course union controls and traditions of loyalty are weaker in the academic field than in many areas, but the major new factor today is the general stance of the government and in particular its industrial relations legislation. The important clauses of the 1982 Employment Act which will make it unfair to dismiss those who leave a union despite the existence of a closed shop, unless the closed shop has been ratified by a vote of 80 per cent of those covered, will not take effect until 1984. They therefore depend on the outcome of the next election.

Employers are therefore opting at the moment for cautious change. Whilst the British Railways Board has abrogated its closed shop agreement with the NUR (to the extent of not dismissing those who left the union because of being disciplined over last year's dispute), it is noticeable that it has not extended this to those who are now joining the FPR; nor has it offered any guarantees of recognition. It knows that the unions can still make everyday life difficult.

The future looks even less rosy for the dissidents in the EEPTU and NATKHE. In Fleet Street, for example, technological and industrial factors mean that some electricians see their future in terms of a move towards a single amalgamated printing union, rather than as a part of an engineering and electrical union grouping, the direction in which the EEPTU appears to be moving. Fleet Street electricians are also out of sympathy with the leaders of their present union. It is, however, difficult to see the NGA or SOGAT in the end taking in dissidents, in face of sanctions under the TUC's internal disputes procedures.

The EEPTU's Broad Left, grouped around the journal *Flashlight*, has already condemned ideas of such a breakaway. The EEPTU has already set up an inquiry into its Press Branch. If, as is possible, this leads to expulsions of branch leaders, employers wishing to uphold their closed shop agreements would have to dismiss electricians currently employed and recruit alternative labour, certainly provoking yet another Fleet Street industrial crisis.

It would not be surprising if they preferred to let sleeping dogs lie. Whether we are about to see any major shakeup in union structure will, in the end, depend on wider political and economic developments. But, whatever the view of Norman Tebbit, most employers – like most union leaders – will be praying that the breakaways which do occur will be a pale and ineffectual reflection on a far smaller scale than those – such as the Spencer Union in the mines – which occurred during the last depression. For in terms of unions and industrial relations they know that more usually means worse. □

John McIlroy is tutor in industrial relations at Manchester University's Dept of Extra-mural Studies.

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Midland Bank has met the challenges of 1982: our business plan is to move forward from the firm base we have now established.

Sir Donald Barron, Chairman of Midland Bank plc, comments:

The 1982 profits of the Midland Bank Group, both at the trading and pre-tax levels, show an increase compared with the previous two years, achieved despite the difficulties which banks everywhere faced – in common with industry and commerce generally – as a result of the worldwide recession.

The staff of the Midland Bank Group around the world have met the problems and challenges of 1982 with resilience, skill and loyalty.

The Results

Profit before taxation amounted to £251.4m against £232.2m last year; an increase of 8% achieved despite higher charges for provisions against possible bad debts of £196m compared with £113m in 1981.

There was a significant improvement in the trend of costs following the savings and productivity reviews carried out during 1981 and 1982; we expect this trend to continue.

Summary of Group Results

	1982 £m	1981 £m
Profit before taxation	**251.4**	232.2
Taxation	**81.5**	39.3
Attributable profit (after minority interests and extraordinary items)	**144.6**	123.9
Dividends	**43.6**	39.6
Retained profit	**101.0**	84.3
Total assets	**47,999**	41,014

International Risk

As a major international banking group it is inevitable that we should be faced with a number of situations where the restructuring of payments of both interest and principal indicates the need to make some prudent provision against possible loss, although that loss may be by no means certain.

Commercial Risk

The recession continues to claim victims both among our business and our personal customers. Our policy in dealing with customers who face problems is to assist in every way we can to help to overcome these, by patience and consistency, so long as there appears to us to be a probability of a viable business outcome.

Objective

Our objective is to ensure that our assets are properly and profitably rewarded, that our costs are firmly controlled and that with our wide geographic spread, we give the best possible service to our many millions of customers – personal and corporate around the world.

Moving Forward

The laying of the foundation for our strategy had the effect of creating a profits and earnings plateau during 1980 and 1981; our business plan is to move forward from the firm base we have now established. We are confident that, in the absence of unforeseen factors, the trend will continue to be favourable.

Donald Barron

Midland Bank Group

Sir Donald Barron's full statement and the report for 1982 are available from:
The Secretary, Midland Bank plc, Head Office, Poultry, London EC2P 2BX

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DIARY

Christopher Price

I was approached on Saturday by an ex-Party member who'd defected to the Social Democrats two years ago; he wanted to re-enter the fold now the Party was its 'old self' again. I hope he's let back in, though the machinery for re-admitting prodigal sons may prove a little sticky for him. His feelings were, fundamentally, of profound relief and may have been reflected in Labour's better showing in the *Weekend World* poll. Things seems to be coming together for once: Tony Benn declaring his loyalty in the *News of the World;* the Campaign Document launched; Social Democrats resigning in Cardiff and quarreling in Liverpool. Darlington was as much a psychological as a political victory. Could it be that Labour is on the mend after its years of psychosomatic disorder?

○

Where my friend was wrong, however, was to confuse Ossie O'Brien with Labour's 'old self'; the Party's old, by-election-winning 'self' used to be Dick Taverne and Shirley Williams, bright young university things and obvious future ministers, who – groomed by weekends at Königswinter – were going to 'turn the century' for a social democratic Europe, strong and free and side by side with a USA run by Kennedys in Camelot. That dream died and its Age of Aquarius never dawned. Ossie O'Brien is a wholly different kettle of fish – from a more authentically English, cooperative tradition; always a nuclear disarmer and a genuine supporter of Michael Foot, he symbolises the change that has come over party policy in recent years. His victory does not simply prove that Labour can now win elections; it shows we can win on radical policies forced through against concerted opposition by the Party's 'old self'. I was particularly pleased to see Denis Healey, the other day, returning to the passions of his youth and rubbishing the Common Market. Like a boulder after an earthquake, the Party has shifted to the Left, but still remains upright. It's the same old boulder, but better placed to be more effective next time.

○

I'm sure the Foreign Office wishes the Helen Smith affair would go away – but I'm equally sure it won't. The tale so far has been grippingly set down by Paul Foot (*The Helen Smith Affair*, Fontana, £2.50) and though it's been sparsely reviewed, it's selling like hot cakes. It comes out as a sort of diplomatic *Archers*, an everyday story of Foreign Office folk, to whom the end justifies the means and British interests, as perceived by them, take precedence over the convenience of any particular citizen – particularly stroppy Yorkshire ones like Helen's father Ron. There are still so many loose ends – Sir David Napley's expenses for representing Dr Richard Arnott, a crucial set of photographs which have suddenly and mysteriously come to light – that the story will run and run for some time yet. I hope it ends with another enquiry to attempt to arrive at the truth, however inconvenient that proves to be for Brits or Saudis. Ron Smith bestrides the whole affair like a colossus, now his suspicions of an Establishment cover-up have been proved right; but at times he almost despaired and gave up, written off by parliamentarians and press as a 'loony'. MPs get a lot of letters from such folk, driven to the edge of paranoia by some private 'fight against wickedness in high places; after a polite acknowledgement, they tend to go straight into the waste-paper basket. I emerged from Paul Foot's book with a determination to read my 'loony' letters rather more carefully in the future.

○

Last month saw the 250th anniversary of the birth of Yorkshire's most celebrated nonconformist (clearly an ancestor of Ron Smith's), Joseph Priestley, Unitarian, preacher, natural scientist and believer in Progress. He is a timely historical reminder for the Labour Party that scientists have always been natural allies of radicals and that now is the time to start recementing an alliance of the kind Harold Wilson successfully put together in 1964. I know that we have our first chemist Prime Minister ever, who toyed around with chromatography before deciding that political power was more to her taste. When asked which minister in her government is in charge of science policy, she tends to say that she is. But, addressing the Annual Meeting of the prestigious Parliamentary and Scientific Committee last week, I met a profound belief that nobody was in charge of our science policy and that Labour could pick up support if it took the issue seriously. Priestley's science was but a part of his political message; Labour's Campaign Document could use a little such oxygen also.

○

Since I have been less than courteous to the Metropolitan Police from time to time in this diary, a tribute to both their courtesy and their true understanding of the Law. They had erected a vast roadblock around Westminster last Tuesday so that the Queen and President Kaunda could ride around and receive the plaudits of their (somewhat thin-on-the-ground) fans. Pedalling back from Covent Garden to my duties on the Police Bill committee, I tried to cycle down Whitehall and was confronted by a superintendent. Where did I think I was going? I explained that I was in a hurry to cast my vote with Eldon Griffiths and other rebel Tories on a civil libertarian amendment to grant errant policemen legal aid when they were up before the Commissioner; and that anyway there was an Order of the House to the Metropolitan Police: 'that the streets leading to the House be kept free and open and that no obstruction be permitted to hinder the passage of Members to and from this House'; and that this Order was clearly prior in law to any duty he might have to the Queen. I don't know which argument prevailed, but he sent me on my way down an empty Whitehall through the cheering crowds and the astonished soldiery; and errant policemen will get their legal aid – unless the government reverses the amendment at the Report Stage in three weeks' time.

○

The IBA's role, I'd thought, was to keep sex, the IRA and political bias off our screens. So there must be some logic in their instruction to *Thames* to black out Bryan Gould on the grounds that he's a prospective MP, but to welcome Jonathan Aitken (for a limited season), although he's a real one. But I wonder if the same logic would have prevailed if Bryan had been Tory and Jonathan Labour.

ROGER WODDIS

Theatre of peace

Employment Secretary Norman Tebbit has urged parents to keep their children at home while peace plays are being performed at school.

Boys and girls who watch a play
Might easily be led astray
By histrionics that release
Their secret yearnings after peace.
Hiroshima and current fears
Are not for childish eyes and ears;
Far better they should learn to trust
The beauty of descending dust.

'It is quite wrong,' the loony said,
'To doubt the boon of being dead
And foster sanity among
The unsophisticated young.'
He always speaks his mind, thank God,
But true believers find it odd
To see such passion reach its peak,
Especially in Holy Week.

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POLAND

Whose spring?

Gustaw Moszcz reports from Poland a year after martial law was imposed

Warsaw

CAN IT REALLY be 14 months since the start of martial law in Poland? The contrast between last year's winter and this could not be greater – I am not referring only to the weather. We all recall the famous slogan of January 1982: 'The Winter is yours but the Spring will be ours'. Such sloganising, for the time being, is over.

The activity of underground oppositionists has reduced to such a great extent that the authorities could recently claim that probably no more than 200 persons, nationwide, were still actively involved. Of course, no one knows the truth of this, but it is reasonably clear that the underground has been effectively neutralised in factories and workplaces. In January 1982, the regime's automatic reply to reports of strikes was that, in fact, there was everywhere a 'normal rhythym of work'. Then, that was patently untrue. Few could argue otherwise in April 1983.

If one glances through the back numbers of 1982 newspapers, certain features recur with depressing regularity – the cold war language, the optimistic reports of increased industrial production, the unearthing of illegal printing houses; and also snippets stating that so-and-so, who had been in hiding, has given themselves up, and was released after questioning. Most such people were middle or low-ranking Solidarity activists, but they are precisely the type of young, committed radical that formed the backbone of Solidarity. The regime shows its political shrewdness by generally offering them a leniency they might not have hoped for a year ago; although they are not finding jobs with the same sort of ease.

If it is true, as one sympathetic Party liberal said to me recently, that the underground leaders are now 'generals without an army', then the government can indeed congratulate itself on handling, with remarkable facility, what seemed, a year ago, to be an impossible situation. But a more accurate description would be 'generals out of touch with an army that is presently disarmed', or, to be more pedantic, that Solidarity's somewhat splintered and concealed leadership in hiding has, inevitably, few political initiatives to offer the workers, whose support for Solidarity has been worn down by the authorities. The interpretation that the government makes of today's generally docile Poland is that society has, at last, come to its senses – recognises that martial law, price reforms and new trade unions have all brought immense benefits, while Solidarity was a brief period of madness. There is, of course, another possibility. A quiet child is not necessarily cooperative; and a cowed child is not unlikely, as soon as teacher's back is turned, to kick over the desk. At the very least, a child who is beaten into submission turns in shoddy work.

Being Poland, the all-pervading silence (which could conceal anything) is broken by jokes and witticisms. I sometimes think that one of the greatest mistakes of Solidarity was that it failed to hire a team of writers specialising in political jokes, since these have always been one of the sharpest, most enduring weapons against successive Polish regimes. The new trade unions, which the government has openly admitted are so far failing to attract industrial workers in any significant numbers, are one of the current targets. It is said that they are *Niazelezne, Samorzadne, Democratyczne, ale Posluszne* – Independent, Self-Governing, Democratic, but Obedient. The bite of the joke is that NSDAP were the initials of the Nazi party. The regime, of course, responds in kind, if only with descriptions of Walesa as a 'monkey with a moustache' (in an article by Wladyslaw Machejek, editor-in-chief of *Zycie Literackie*).

THIS GAME OF MUTUAL insults gives spice to an otherwise dull existence, but little more than that. More ominous matters are on everyone's mind, especially in connection with Jaruzelski's policy speech on the need for the Party to 'go on to the offensive' against subversion, conducted by the intelligentsia, at all levels of education. As one intellectual put it, 'There's no need to bully the workers at the moment, so there's both time for and a necessity of finally weeding out the intellectuals.' We are already hearing of radical shake-ups in higher education institutions, with about 50 departments being 'suspended', mostly in the field of humanities.

This radical step is aimed at 'rationalising' the over-duplication of higher education teaching and research, and certainly many named departments are academically weak, turning out qualified students who will not find work appropriate to their specialisms. But, perhaps coincidentally, a good proportion of those departments that will not be taking new students this September are also in subject areas that are ideologically dangerous, such as history, philosophy, or languages. On a smaller scale, lecturers who have been singled out by the authorities as being politically unreliable are facing considerable pressure against conducting certain lines of research and teaching, or holding seminars where 'revisionist' speakers might be invited.

As the last of the snow is cleared by milder, sunny days, and the scent of Spring grows daily, people are thinking of planning their holidays. For most Poles, this entails careful preparation of documents, sending the right letters to the correct bureaucrat at the proper time. But with martial law still in place (albeit 'suspended') the only way to travel *abroad* without an official reason is by invitation from a 'next-of-kin' living in the foreign country that it is proposed to visit. There is, at the moment, a tangible sense of cultural isolation in Poland. As one wit put it, the capital city is being converted from 'the Paris of the East into The Moscow of the West'. □

FRANCE

Lost chances

Diana Johnstone on the state of the French Left

Paris

AFTER LESS THAN two years in office, the French Left coalition government has accepted a reversal of its economic policies in a strange atmosphere of fatalism, passivity and hypocrisy that suggests a dangerous loss of control of events or even of any sense of direction.

Hypocrisy: until the municipal elections were safely past, socialists indignantly denied predictions that a heavy dose of austerity measures were in the works. The election results showed that the worst disaffection with the left parties was in traditional working class bastions. This persuaded President Francois Mitterrand to drape the new policy in the robes of 'continuity' by getting Pierre Mauroy, the socialist Mayor of Lille, whose working-class background is considered an asset, to stay on as Prime Minister. Meanwhile, Finance Minister Jacques Delors was dispatched to Brussels to negotiate new paraties in the European Monetary System (EMS). Delors publicly called the Germans arrogant, and came home a hero for having forced Bonn to revaluate the mark upwards by more than the franc was devaluated downwards.

The fact that the government had decided, in order to stay in the EMS, that it must accept a reversal of economic direction to meet German conditions only became clear when the austerity measures were announced on 25 March. Delors presented them as an extension of previous policies. 'We have been relatively successful', he said in effect, 'in checking unemployment: now we must achieve comparable results in checking inflation and reducing the trade deficit (93 billion francs in 1982)'. But the austerity measures will in fact undo the past

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success in holding down unemployment. Growth is now projected at zero rather than 1.5 per cent and consumer spending is being reduced. The only hope being held out is a supposed economic recovery radiating out from the United States this year.

Fatalism: because, in less than two years, the Left in office has managed to eliminate both of its most obvious options for dealing with the economic crisis.

First, there was a feeble stab at 'launching economic recovery through popular consumption' by raising purchasing power at the bottom of the social scale. This could have worked only by co-ordinating supply with the increased demand. In the absence of such precautions, instead of stimulating the domestic economy the enlarged domestic demand was met by imports, swelling the foreign trade deficit.

This phase ended with the June 1982 devaluation of the franc (the second since the Socialists took power in May 1981) and temporary wage and price controls. But a second option still seemed open to the government. This was personified by the promotion of Jean Pierre Chevenement as Minister of Industry, Research and Technology. It was the option of economic recovery through use of the nationalised sector to promote an aggressive re-industrialisation.

Now Chevenement is out of the government and that option too is discredited – without ever having been seriously tried, or even clearly defined.

Passivity: The Paternalism of Mitterrand's Presidency – poured into the mould of De Gaulle's Fifth Republic – has only reinforced a passive disengagement from politics already well under way in the left and Labour movements before his election. Mitterrand's style, labelled for the campaign bill boards as 'tranquil power' meant to suggest a far-seeing pilot keeping a steady course through fog and tempest. But is he perhaps above all merely a party leader (when he is not a writer) skilled at holding together various feuding factions by giving all of them the illusion their chance may come?

Chevenement's Left faction within the Socialist Party, CERES (Centre for Socialist Study, Research and Education), is now free to criticise Delors and to try to rouse some sort of Left opposition from the prevailing torpor. The Communist Party, on the other hand, has shown that it is willing to swallow anything to keep its four ministers in the cabinet. The Communist-led General Confederation of Labour (CGT) continues to mute its grumbling and to lose members. Labour leaders are complaining aloud that the government failed to consult them about the austerity measures and have noted that it forgot to include a Labour ministry in the reshuffled cabinet (the functions will be taken over by the Ministry of Social Affairs).

The Socialist Party has no organic connections to labour and faces no serious electoral challenge until the legislative elections due in 1986. Business and the press in all western capitals welcome the austerity measures as necessary. In France, the 'people of the Left' are not protesting loudly. But the silence of despondency is dangerous in the long run. The most significant fact of the March municipal elections is that the trend of working-class voters in the 1970s to shift from the Communists to the Socialists has ended. In Paris and other urban centres, the new trend among working-class voters is abstention – or a direct jump to far right candidates appealing to xenophobic resentment of immigrant workers. □

CHINA

Blood red

Jonathan Mirsky on the fate of the Red Guard commanders

ON 6 JANUARY, 1967, Red Guards in Peking briefly detained China's Chief of State, Liu Shaoqi, and forced his wife to stand on a table, wearing a necklace of ping pong balls painted gold and a tight-fitting dress, while thousands of the country's most carefully chosen students abused her as a corrupt harridan. It was a climax of Cultural Revolution student power and a trigger for torture and death on campuses all over China.

Only this month did Deng Xiaoping and his allies, nearly all of them ex-victims of the Red Guards, find the courage publicly to condemn and sentence to prison the three most notorious leaders of that period. During the first three years of the Cultural Revolution, 1966-1969, acting in the name of Chairman Mao, they had directed millions of Red Guards to humiliate Party chiefs, convulse every university, and bring key army units to the edge of the mutiny.

At first expressing student discontent at the pre-revolutionary snobbism of university authorities, the Red Guards soon became little more than pawns in still hard-to-unravel struggles that took place within the Party. Even the Gang of Four, with its nearly unquenchable capacity for hounding and murdering, found the Red Guard commanders too dangerous to leave at large. The trio finally sentenced on 16 March have been in custody since 1973, three years before Mao's death and the Gang's own fall.

Despite their well-demonstrated taste for revenge, the Dengists did not rush to try the Gang and the Red Guard leaders who had persecuted so many of those now in authority in Peking. The Gang were not dragged into open court until late 1979, and the Red Guards were allowed to wait three years more for what seemed to have been a trial *in camera*.

And in a country where mere embezzlers are shot on national TV, the Gang and the Red Guard leaders received only prison sentences. For the two principle Red Guards this means seven more years behind bars, once their ten years on remand have been taken into account. Such leniency reveals Deng Xiaoping's awareness that millions of Gang supporters and ex-Red Guards still exist in the bureaucracy, the army, and the Party, and in the crowds of semi-employed young people lining the pavements of China's major cities. Deng and his protégés pepper their speeches with warnings about these 'leftists' (code for Maoists), whose red arm-bands once allowed them to travel freely around China in great swarms and drag their teachers about in dunce caps. But the Dengists are being careful, too, not to provoke their old enemies into a panic-stricken backlash.

The two most notorious Red Guard commanders were Nie Yuanzi and Kuai Dafu, and it is they who received sentences of 17 years – commuted to seven – two weeks ago in the Peking Intermediate Peoples Court after languishing in detention without trial for a decade, an illegal but common procedure in China.

When Nie, who is now 62, posted Peking's first Cultural Revolution wall poster in a student dining hall at 2pm on 25 May, 1966, she was a philosophy instructor and Party branch secretary in Peking University. Her poster attacked the university authorities by name for forbidding discussion of a play, written by the capital's vice-mayor, Wu Han, which not too subtly used Ming dynasty allegories to undermine Mao Zedong. Mao's fury with this play is usually taken to be the opening shot of the Cultural Revolution and Nie's poster sparked the tumult in Peking itself.

By 1 June Mao had ordered national publicity for Nie's message and within three years she had been elevated to the Central Committee as an alternative member. Seven million students visited her university in 1966 to receive inspiration themselves for riots on their own campuses.

Kuai Dafue, a peasant's son, is 25 years younger than Nie. He accelerated the movement at Peking's elite technical university, Qinghua, with a poster condemning a team sent onto the campus to restore order by Mao's main adversary, Liu Shaoqi, whose daughter was a Qinghua student. It was at Qinghua that Liu was detained and his wife humiliated.

Kuai Dafu's contribution was to organise mass sit-ins outside the Party's Peking headquarters, calling for Liu Shaoqi to be produced – he would probably have been killed on the spot, rather than dying later of neglect while under arrest – and howling for Deng Xiaoping to be smashed. He directed investigations of the army's top commanders, looted their safes, and obtained their plans for the military control of China's airports, highways, bridges, and railways. In a celebrated wallposter, he compared himself to 'a brick in a privy, stinking and hard, that never yields.' He ignored even his hero Mao's personal warning that he had become 'swollen in the head' and was not toppled by his ex-followers until March 1971. Only a few western specialists remember Nie Yuanzi and Kuai Dafu. But they still inspire sufficient anxiety in China for Deng to keep them out of sight for a decade and then give them the Party's equivalent of a slap on the wrist with a fan. □

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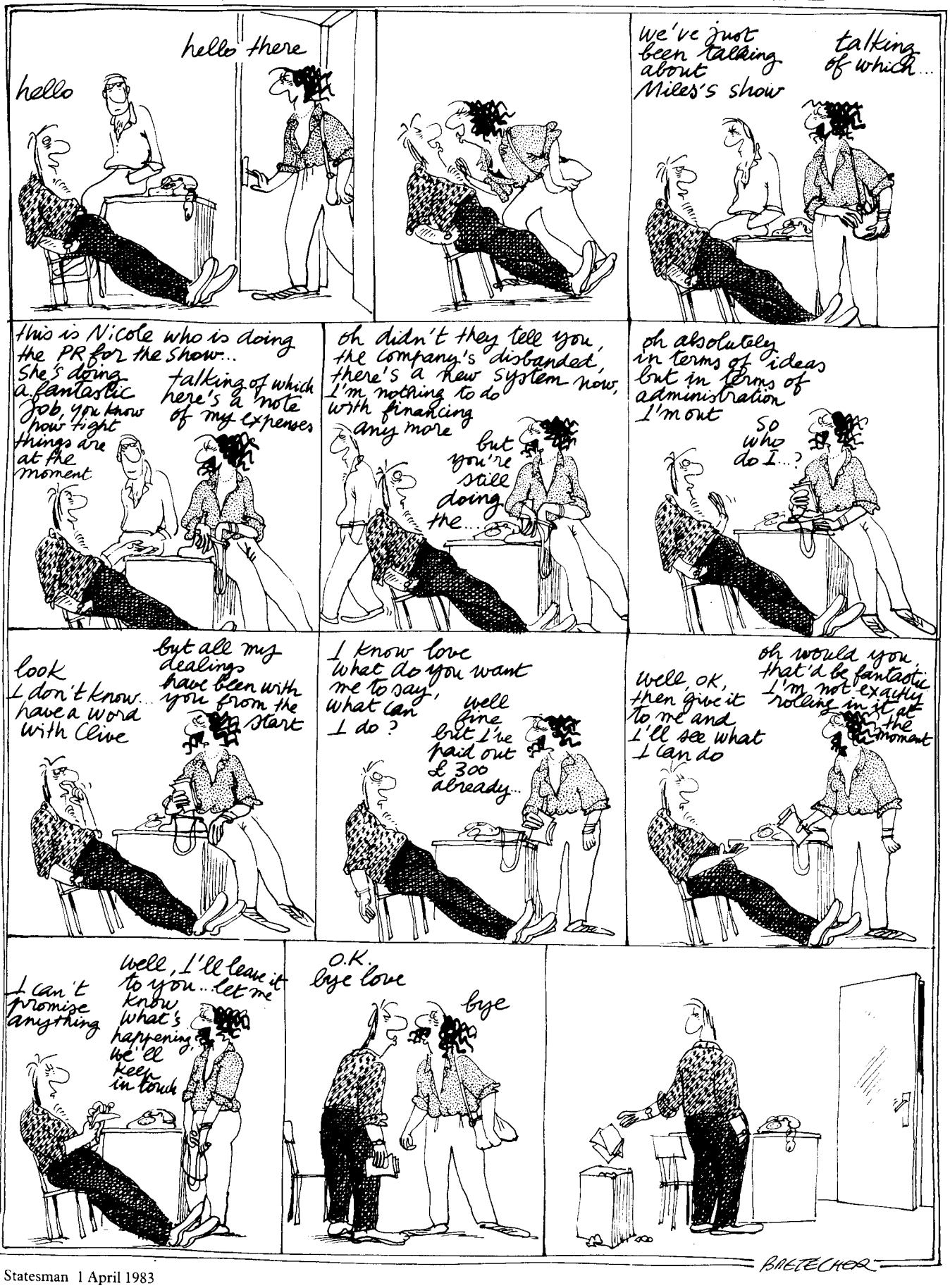
BRETECHER

THE JOYS OF FREELANCE


hello
hello there
we've just been talking about Miles's show
talking of which...
this is Nicole who is doing the PR for the show... She's doing a fantastic job, you know how tight things are at the moment
talking of which here's a note of my expenses
oh didn't they tell you, the company's disbanded, there's a new system now, I'm nothing to do with financing any more
but you're still doing the...
oh absolutely in terms of ideas but in terms of administration I'm out
so who do I...?
look I don't know... have a word with Clive
but all my dealings have been with you from the start
I know love what do you want me to say, what can I do?
well fine but I've paid out £300 already...
well, OK, then give it to me and I'll see what I can do
oh would you, that'd be fantastic I'm not exactly rolling in it at the moment
I can't promise anything
well, I'll leave it to you... let me know what's happening. We'll keep in touch
O.K. bye love
bye
BRETECHER

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LETTERS

Marxism's third life

Ms S. Khan, South Asia Solidarity Group, London SE 21

How clever of the *New Statesman* to illustrate the intellectual poverty of third world marxism by being unable to find any third world marxists capable of analysing it.

Only 'metropolitan marxists' like Maxine Molyneux and Fred Halliday (*NS* 11 March) could so casually and confidently ignore the structure and mechanisms of imperialism which are the chief determinants of third world people's lives. They assure us that in the third world 'weak states and economies, corrupt poiticians, extreme inequalities and social deprivation offered little in the way of a moral, intellectual or ultimately military defence of the capitalist system.' The 'military defence' of Cambodia and Indochina have been swept aside since there is no place for them in Molyneux and Halliday's world view, which never analyses the role of western interests.

'Industrialisation' is considered synonymous with progress, irrespective of what is produced, by whom, for whom and with what consequences. We are being told that third world countries are merely backward, industrialising in the same way as first world countries have done, simply a few hundred years behind, and that 'it is therefore hardly surprising that anti-capitalist sentiments are more easily aroused in these countries than in those where the longer term material benefits of the system have softened the impact of inequality.' The implication is that in a few years capitalism will begin to benefit the third world in the same way as it does the west. In fact these benefits are the direct result of imperialism and the purpose of capitalism in the third world (which is usually *dependent* capitalism) is to continue to channel these benefits away from the third world.

Molyneux and Halliday have a word of approval for 'at least some of (their) third world counterparts' who, following in the footsteps of the west, have recognised 'the potential of social forces in addition to the working class (women, blacks, urban squatters and anti-nuclear movements)' – quite a shock to those of us in the third world labouring under the illusion that women constituted half of the working class. As for black third world countries they suddenly find themselves without a working class at all . . .

The authors have a remarkable lack of interest in third world marxists: Samir Ami, Fanon and Rodney are not mentioned at all; Mao gets half a paragraph. Even more revealingly, the majority of third world people who are peasants merit less than a sentence while the heart-searchings of metropolitan marxists get a column of their own. In fact the whole tone of the article is one of 'metropolitan' arrogance ('Marxism in the third world has shown little innovation') where accuracy or analysis is unimportant – for instance arch 'comprador' Lee Kuan Yew is described as anti-imperialist!

Finally, and most dangerously, Molyneux and Halliday invoke Marx to back up their implication that third world revolutionary states must necessarily become dependent on the Soviet Union. In other words third world liberation is impossible. The very fact that such an article is the *New Statesman's* only recent comment on marxism and the third world shows how deeply cultural imperialism is entrenched in the British Left.

Unburying Marx

Nicolas Walter, London N1

The problem of the communist slogan 'From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs' still needs to be settled, after the inaccurate and incomplete references in Peter Kellner's article (*NS* 11 March) and Alex Callinicos's letter (Letters 18 March).

The confusion about Bakunin comes from the *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*. It rightly attributes the phrase to Marx, in the *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (1875); but it wrongly attributes a similar phase, 'From each according to his faculties, to each according to his needs,' to Bakunin in a 'Declaration signed by 47 anarchists on trial after the failure of their uprising at Lyons in 1870'. The source for this is given as J. Morrison Davidson's book *The Old Order and the New* (1890). He got the whole thing wrong, but there is no excuse for getting it wrong nearly a century later. Bakunin never used the phrase – he escaped from the Lyons commune in 1870, and there was no trial of anarchists then. The declaration including the phrase and signed by 47 anarchists appeared during a trial at Lyons, not in 1870, but in 1883, and the author was not Bakunin (who died in 1876) but Kropotkin (who was one of the accused).

So Marx didn't take the phrase from Bakunin; but neither did Kropotkin take it from Marx, for the *Critique of the Gotha Programme* wasn't published until 1891, and the phrase was widely used by anarchist communists during the 1870s. Anyway, it was much older than this, appearing in the discussions about socialism and communism 30 years earlier, when Marx had anticipated his own use of it. In *The German Ideology* (1846) he criticised the Saint-Simonian slogan 'From each according to his capacities, to each according to his works' by saying that the second part should be 'To each according to his needs'.

But *The German Ideology* wasn't published until 1932, and Marx had been anticipated by Louis Blanc. In the *History of Ten Years, 1830-1840* (1841) he had already criticised the Saint-Simonian slogan by saying that 'more is owed to him who has more needs, and more may be required of him who has more faculties'. In later editions of *The Organisation of Labour* (from 1850) he said that in the future society each 'will produce according to his faculties and will consume according to his needs'; and after the 1848 Revolution his doctrine was expressed in the slogan 'From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs'.

But Blanc had himself been anticipated by Etienne Cabet. In *The Journey to Icaria* (1840) the principles of the utopian community, echoed in the articles of the actual communities based on it, include 'Each has the duty to work the same number of hours a day, *according to his means*, and the right to receive an equal share, *according to his needs*, of all the products'; and the many slogans on the title-page include 'To each according to his needs, from each according to his powers'. And the idea goes back to Babeuf, and even to Morelly.

Lead in petrol

D. Bryce-Smith, Professor of Organic Chemistry, University of Reading

The new findings on the effects of lead pollution on the brains of children reported by Rick Rogers (*NS* 11 March) further highlight the extraordinarily permissive government policy towards the adulteration of petrol by lead. For example, on 18 March I saw the Junior Environment Minister, Mr Giles Shaw, on TV-am, trying to excuse this policy by asserting that the vast majority of cars now on our roads could not run on totally lead-free petrol.

This statement is wholly false. I am confident that neither Mr Shaw nor gentlemen from the oil, lead, and motor industries who spread such stories could produce a single car now on the road unable to run well on properly formulated lead-free fuel. The truth is that lead is no more desirable in the fuel for cars than it is in the brains of children or, for that matter, Ministers of the Crown.

Education for peace

Julie A. Mills, School of Peace Studies, University of Bradford, Bradford BD7 1DP

There is growing concern about education for peace in our schools, and the implementation of peace studies into the curriculum is an important contemporary issue. However, there is little information available about the amount of peace education that does exist; consequently there is a serious lack of appropriate curricula-support materials.

I am a teacher currently engaged in a project in which I am examining recent developments in peace education in secondary schools. I would like to appeal to teachers, students, and parents to contact me with any information they may have regarding the existence of peace education in their schools or schools with which they are acquainted.

Replies will, of course, be treated confidentially but I hope that the substance of the information I receive will eventually be of direct use to activists and to further the cause of peace education.

Who's a pretty voter then?

Marion Notman, Edinburgh

Reading through Nicholas Murray's article on the Bermondsey by-election (*NS* 4 Mar) which questioned Labour's failure to 'lead an assault on Mrs Thatcher's eulogy of Victorian values', I came across an astonishingly irrelevant reference to a female Labour-voter's 'attractiveness'.

That Nicholas Murray, while advancing his ideas of 'radical and socialist thinking', harbours harmful and antiquated attitudes towards women is disappointing, but not particularly surprising. That the *New Statesmen*, however, lets remarks like that see the light of day does depress me.

Information wanted

Marlene Winfield, Prison Reform Trust

The Prison Reform Trust is at present compiling a guide to community involvement with prisons. Our aim is to assess the current level of involvement and provide a source of ideas for its further development.

I would be very grateful if we could make use of your magazine to request information from people involved in relevant activities. I feel certain that many of your readers will find the guide of interest and several may have something to contribute.

Our address is Nuffield Lodge, Regents Park, London NW1.

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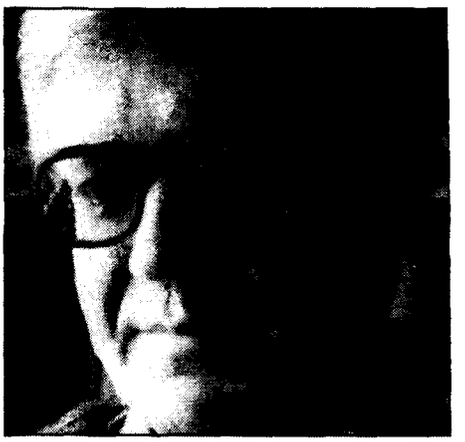
John Lucas

A new Daks suit

I opened Peter Porter's *Collected Poems* with a feeling of some uneasiness. Years ago I lost my copy of his first volume, *Once Bitten Twice Bitten*, and I was nervous in case some of the poems which I could now only lazily recall turned out to be less good than they had seemed in 1961. I needn't have worried. The best of them come up fresh as paint, witty, uncharitably acute. If you want to know what much English life felt like a quarter-of-a-century ago Porter's early poems will tell you. They will also tell you how people talked, what they ate, drank, how they dressed: 'This new Daks suit, greeny-brown,/Oyster-coloured buttons, single vent, tapered /Trousers, no waistcoat, hairy tweed.' It was a world of espresso bars ('What's in a name/If Cheapside and the Marshalsea mean Eng. Lit./And the Fantasie, Sa Tortugo, Grisbi, Bongi-Bo/Mean life?'), in which there was a newly fashionable concern with discussing cancer and the bomb. And Porter set it all down. He still does, of course, and I suppose he runs the risk of being called modish or that anyway his readiness to name names will date his poems. 'O impossible England under the modern stars/Mr Edward du Cann thanks the voters/of Taunton for their generous support' – which England is that?

But for the most part Porter is our best satirist of *moeurs contemporaines*. He has a kind of disenchanted, tough relish for the world he observes, and it is easy to understand why he so admires Rochester. As with Rochester, a dark seam of cheerlessness is always threatening to break through the surface wit of his poems. 'Unhappiness is real as turning round', he says in 'Between Two Texts', but on the other hand he knows that 'real pain is never art' ('Ode to Afternoon'), and at his best he is therefore a very inventive poet. The famous modesty which he wears like a mask and which has too often been taken at face value should not lead anyone to assume that he is careless about his craft. He may not be formally very adventurous – though the 'Sanitised Sonnets' sequence is managed with a proper *insouciance* – but his way with language is masterly. Anyone who can accommodate 'claggy' and 'matutinal' within the one poem ('Down Cemetery Road') gets my vote. In fact, the worst thing about that poem is its title, and this is odd because Porter is usually so good in this respect that you feel required to read one of the poems simply to see whether it can measure up to its start. (The answer is mostly yes.) It is true that he can occasionally produce a groan-making title such as 'Diana and Actaeon' with the result that you find yourself murmuring ungratefully, 'but *anyone* can write that sort of a poem'; but then when you read Porter's you realise that the solemnity is merely a way of having you on. *His* 'Diana and Actaeon' is a teasing, characteristically wry and original inspection of the conscience: 'Soon she will come to see you/she has her times of the month/and memories. Memories of the sun/things not looked at directly'.



Peter Porter and Carolyn Forché

Collected Poems
PETER PORTER *Oxford* £12.50
The Country Between Us
CAROLYN FORCHE *Cape* £3.95
The Penguin Book of Homosexual Verse
ed. STEPHEN COOTE *Allen Lane* £8.95
Penguin £3.95
Later Poems 1972-1982
R. S. THOMAS *Macmillan* £7.95

As those lines I hope reveal, Porter has more exuberant imagination than he's sometimes given credit for. He is also more wide-ranging. In fact, I can't think of any other contemporary poet who is so consistently entertaining over such a variety of material. The poet who in one mood can write of the King of the Cats that 'his claws extended were the coulter/of the gods and a raw March wind/was in his merely agricultural yawn' can in another provide what I have found to be the unforgettable image of the angel in Blythburgh Church, or the account of 'The King of Limerick's Army'. But this is all a way of saying that £12.50 is a small price to pay for so much pleasure.

I am not sure whether Carolyn Forché would agree. The poems in the first section of her book are concerned with the horrors of life – or more often death – in El Salvador, and she makes unironically large claims for making art out of real pain:

> I will live
> and living cry out until my voice is gone
> to its hollow of earth, where with our
> hands and by the lives we have chosen
> we will dig deep into our deaths.

But at what point do poems that cry out cease to be poems? *Can* poems cry out?

> In Spanish he whispers there is no time left.
> It is the sound of scythes arcing in wheat,
> the ache of some field song in Salvador.
> The wind along the prison, cautious
> as Francisco's hands on the inside, touching
> the walls as he walks, it is his wife's breath
> slipping into his cell each night while he
> imagines his hand to be hers. It is a small country.
> There is nothing one man will not do to another.

I *think* that works. There are, however, other poems which don't, or at least where the catalogues of cruelty and suffering would seem to me to become more memorable if written out as prose. Poetry makes its own demands, and Forché knows this. She has various neat and carefully crafted ways of threading sounds through a poem in order to provide the necessary momentum for what she has to say. In other words she is a poet and not a poseur. Even so, I do not think that on the evidence of this book she has managed to rescue the unsayable for poetry; and it seems to me that the best poems of *The Country Between Us* are to be found in the middle section, where Forché's cool, short-lined verse paragraphs, discussing love and friendship, manage to generate or imply a good deal of heat. 'As Children Together', about the growing apart of childhood friends, is probably the book's most successful poem.

What to make of the Penguin anthology? Stephen Coote worries about the title: should he have used the word 'gay' (no, it's likely to date), or 'homoerotic' (no, it's unfamiliar and pompous). I must say that I'm less worried by that than I am by what Coote thinks will pass for verse. Inevitably much

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of the material in this anthology has to be translations – mainly from the Greek, Latin and French. But need they be quite so awful? Coote explains that where a number of translations of particular poems exist he has chosen the older version because 'this removes too 20th-century a bias' and also bears witness to 'gay interests in other periods'. But surely the poems themselves demonstrate those interests? And why choose older if older means worse? That seems to me the worst kind of condescension, and a decisive way of undermining the poetry he wants to promote.

It certainly does no kind of justice to the Greek Anthology to present it in Sidney Oswald's version. ('Like when the burning sun doth rise,/And drives the stars from out the skies,/My very soul was turned to flame,/When 'mongst the youths first Thendis came.') And given the fact that Alistair Elliot's stunning versions of Verlaine have been available since 1979, why do we have to put up with the woefully inferior translations of François Pirou? The anthology has very good things in it. It could hardly be otherwise. Coote is right to draw attention to Katherine Philips and he makes excellent use of Emily Dickinson. But I wish he had omitted those dreadful maunderings that make up most of the pages of the last third of the anthology. 'Look, we have come out', they say in their thoroughly artless manner. To adapt Bertrand Russell's famous remark, they may have come out, but why should I look?

Another adaptation, this time from jazzman Ronnie Scott, sprang unbidden to mind as I worked my way through R. S. Thomas's *Later Poems*: 'It's a bit like spending a month in Halifax one wet Sunday afternoon.' 'I am eyes/merely, witnessing virtue's/Defeat; seeing the young born/Fair, knowing the cancer/Awaits them.' It isn't simply the drabness of what's said that appals, it's *how* it's said, the montonous thump with which Thomas sets down the first word of each of those run-on lines, the utter lack of sap or lift in his rhythms. Empson remarked that 'Milton could say God damn you to hell and make it sing'. Not so Thomas; for the most part the poems reek of a glum calvinistic egotism that chills me through and through. 'Marriage' must be about the meanest poem a man ever wrote to his wife, and in 'Caller' Thomas looks at a helpless commercial traveller, led heaven knows how, poor sod, to the poet's door:

> Friend, I say, nursing him with my eyes
> from the bone's
> cancer, since we are at death's
> door, come in,
> let us peer at eternity
> through the cracks in each other's hearts.

There's hospitality for you! □

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The A1 of C^3I

The Super-Intelligent Machine
ADRIAN BERRY *Cape* £7.95

Two recent items from the Land of the Rising Yen. A workman, seeking to correct some small malfunction in one of the robots on the production line, failed to activate the safety arrangements and was beaten to death by its mechanical arms. Shortly afterwards, recognising the logic of technological advance, a Japanese trade union agreed that robots with appropriate qualifications should be deemed eligible for membership. Admittedly, at that stage, this merely made them liable to pay the dues. But doubtless it will not be long before suitable rights, duties, benefits and dispute procedures are worked out. Slightly bizarre today, perhaps, but tomorrow just routine.

Both episodes are relevant to the theme of this book, which is an enthusiastic, not to say starry-eyed account of the computer and its potential. Adrian Berry, the author, is science correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, and he gives a crisp, uncluttered resumé of the work that has been done so far on 'artificial intelligence'. He describes how the machines have evolved from glorified calculators to a point where they can play chess at Grandmaster level, defeat the world backgammon champion, recognise and respond verbally to the human voice, churn out poems, short stories and political speeches that are often hard to distinguish from what we fondly think of as the genuine article, and engage in dialogue – at least through the teleprinter – in which it is barely possible to detect that there is not a flesh-and-blood teacher, social counsellor, psychiatric researcher at the other end of the keyboard.

The weakness, it seems to me, is that there is little or no attempt to put this into any larger context. Computers playing chess, however efficiently, raise few political or ethical problems. But computers running factories, diagnosing disease, organising social welfare, conducting police surveillance and the like – all perfectly feasible applications – are a different matter. Mr Berry's interest is almost entirely in what computers can, or could do. His lack of concern for questions of control and responsibility gives an impression of frivolity, a sense that the game is already lost and that effectively these clever machines, once they have mastered the trick of learning by experience and protecting themselves from having the plug pulled out, will soon sweep those rather inadequate human beings to one side.

The question of pulling out the plug, in fact, is addressed in one of the most interesting chapters. He takes the classic case of the conscientious sentry who refuses to let his commanding general into the camp, even though he knows who he is, because the general cannot remember the password, and applies it to the programmer who has so carefully and skilfully ordered his instructions to the machine that it is impossible to override them, even in an extreme emergency. If the machine is linked up to any sort of physical apparatus – controlling another machine say – then in principle it has access to means of retaliation. In the end, as with the Japanese robot, there is a real possibility that it will find a way to kill rather than disobey.

Having established that somewhat chilling picture, the final section spins off into realms of more distant fantasy. Once the computer has outdistanced its present physical constraints, as set by the already obsolescent micro-chip, and incorporates those accretions of power, speed and memory promised by such recent innovations as the Nobel-prize-winning Josephson Junction, then the sky – at least in the Berry vision – becomes the limit.

A sufficiently intelligent machine, he argues, would be able, literally, to reproduce itself. The basic process by which this might happen was outlined 35 years ago by the great American mathematician John von Neumann, when computers were still full of valves and had to be kept in refrigerated temples almost the size of cathedrals. Essentially you give the machine a complete description of itself, and then feed in a second description of a machine which is precisely similar except that it has already received the first description. You then order the first machine to construct a duplicate corresponding exactly to the second description. If you finally then tell the first machine to copy and pass on the crucial instruction to its offspring, you then have the makings of an infinite series of computer clones.

The book concludes with Berry's vision of a universe gradually colonising itself with just such a family of reproductive computers:

> The only reason why we cannot begin this great project today is that nobody has yet succeeded in building a von Neumann machine. Yet judging by the present progress of computing, it is a reasonable assumption that such a machine could be built fairly early in the twenty-first century. Allowing another few decades for programming and testing it and making improvements, it could be launched towards one of the nearest stars by the middle of the next century.

There is, however, just one small intervening problem. It is called survival. While we wait for the von Neumann machine, most of the really serious computer research and development goes into what is laughingly called 'defence', and particularly that area known in the jargon as C^3I – command, control, communication, intelligence. As the missiles get faster, more accurate and more lethal, the human future narrows down to that deadly notion known as 'launch on warning'. If the computers which constitute the trigger mechanism can keep us alive through the next few decades, they probably deserve to go on and colonise the other galaxies. Good luck to them. □

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Scientists, the Arms Race and Disarmament

ed. JOSEPH ROTBLAT *Taylor and Francis* £9.50

A million dollars a minute are spent on armaments. Over six per cent of the world's resources are devoted to the arms race each year. One in three of all scientists is employed on military problems. The US spends more on military bands than it does on disarmament. These four statements drawn from this book all act as markers to the extent of the problem facing disarmers.

Scientists, the Arms Race and Disarmament is the product of a UNESCO/Pugwash symposium held some months ago. Clear traces of its origins remain. The chapters vary in quality, are often repetitious and, on occasion, contradictory. Nevertheless, a number of valuable issues are raised. Stephen Marks claims that it is the dynamic of technical change that is now driving the arms race forward rather than the Military, while Marek Thee complains that the dominance of military requirements in the Research and Development (R&D) budgets of the major powers has distorted the whole direction of scientific advance. Elements of these concerns have reached the Labour Party, at least. The tail-end of last autumn's conference saw the passage of Composite 53 calling on the next Labour Government to 'control and curtail the disproportionate expenditure of limited research and development funding within the defence sector'.

Francesco Calogero, writing about the dynamics of the nuclear arms race, separates novel weapons developments into two kinds: stabilising and destabilising, depending on whether they reinforce deterrence or undermine it. Thus developments that lead towards the possession of a first-stroke capacity are destabilising, while those that reinforce a second-strike retaliatory capacity are stabilising. Such ideas may help to direct defence R&D when the next Labour Government fudges the manifesto commitment to unilateralism.

However, not all the ideas are as useful. The book is permeated with the myth of a 'Golden Age'. For most of the authors, scientists have been unwittingly and unknowingly incorporated with the military-industrial complex. When they realise what has happened their superior morality will force them to restore their innocence. This is wishful thinking. Scientists, like representatives of all other groups in society, have collaborated with the powers that be in all manner of oppression. The answer lies not with enlightened scientists, but elsewhere.

Glyn Ford

Some People

HAROLD NICOLSON *Constable* £5.95

Some People is a successful marriage of the short-story genre and autobiography. Constable has rightly decided to bring it back into print to give another generation the opportunity to read this classic of the Twenties.

Harold Nicolson, best known in literary circles for labelling, and many modern critics would say libelling, Tennyson's poetry as morbid, fused his own real world with that of his imagination. 'The idea was to put real people in imaginary situations, and imaginary people in real situations.' The book owes much to Bloomsbury and Lytton Strachey's *Eminent Victorians,* but is an idiosyncratic view of mannered society at the time. He scans his school-days, Oxford and years with the Foreign Office. He looks with amusement at schoolboy heroes characterised by the fictional J.D. Marstock, the embodiment of public-school spirit. The tone of the whole book is one of restrained irony.

One of Nicolson's identifiable characters is Lambert Orme, a latter-day aesthete, with more than a whiff of Wilde about him. He represents Ronald Firbank. The pages devoted to Orme show particularly the final twists and turns of the good short story; and the untidy man of the closing paragraphs is undoubtedly Keynes, as certainly as the lady at the end who mistakes Nicolson for Nicholls is Ottoline Morrell.

The most fascinating introduction given is to Lord Curzon, pronouncing his 'a's short, going nowhere without his footrest, and working phenomenally hard. One night at Ouchy, after 19 hours' work to Nicolson's sure knowledge, Curzon wrote an eight-page report for the Cabinet, and 22 letters were ready by breakfast 'stamped and directed'. In Curzon's presence, Nicolson met Mussolini, 'the iris of his eyes entirely surrounded by white'. Previously Nicolson had noticed this only 'in photographs of distinguished mesmerists'. Such shrewd observations are apparent throughout *Some People.*

It is a delightful book which gently deflates the self-esteem of a by-gone era. At the end, it is as though the diplomatic Rolls-Royces can just be heard quietly 'crunching the freshly raked and watered gravel', to disappear for ever with their imperious occupants.

Brian Martin

Cobbett

RAYMOND WILLIAMS *Oxford* £7.95 & £1.75

For all the spate of literature about the doughty William, there is still a niche to be filled, and this is done most admirably by this handy potted guide, an addition to OUP's Past Masters series*.

Culling liberally from Cobbett's own writings on all manner of things over 40 years – grammar, cookery, gardening and forestry included – Professor Williams has compiled a thoroughly indexed summary, invaluable to the traveller in Cobbett's footsteps. Not only does he conveniently encapsulate what Cobbett was, give an idea of how he appeared to his contemporaries and what he did during his turbulent 72 years, but he also interprets imaginatively Cobbett's style and ideas within the context of his times. Williams points out that, for all his voluminous writings, Cobbett produced no connected, systematic set of ideas but adopted many powerful and often dangerously isolated attitudes, not least on the subject of the poverty of the agricultural worker – his most enduring theme.

Cobbett, with his multiple doings which read like a rip-roaring schoolboy yarn, is not an historical figure to be neatly packaged: he comprehensively changed his political stance over time and was egotistically engaged with his own lifelong posture as hero of an epic. As Professor Williams says, Cobbett's accumulation of ideas, based largely on the 'Merrie England' concept of his childhood recollections, was swamped by the tide of wider events then transforming the country into a capitalist-industrial state.

Donald Cobbett

*Other titles recently published in the Past Master series: *Newman* by Owen Chadwick; *Clausewitz* by Michael Howard; *Bayle* by Elisabeth Labousse; *Proust* by Derwent May; *Hegel* by Peter Singer.

Apologies – to Ann Shearer for the omission of a word from her short notice of *Ernest Jones* (NS 11 March).

Human stress, work and job satisfaction

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by T. M. Fraser

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FICTION
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Complete simplicity

Running to Paradise
BRUCE ARNOLD *Hamish Hamilton* £7.95
A Tiger for Malgudi
R. K. NARAYAN *Heinemann* £7.50
Coming from Behind
HOWARD JACOBSON *Chatto* £7.95

Bruce Arnold's 'Coppinger Quartet' is a circular narrative in which the unnamed son-narrator struggles to make sense of his own life and that of his nomadic, passionate, treacherous and ultimately unhappy father, ending where the prologue of the first novel, *Singer at the Wedding*, began. The son is now in his thirties and the always equivocal father-son relationship (who takes responsibility for whom?) is exacerbated by his father's growing decrepitude – a fact that George meets with a desperation of rage that would have satisfied Dylan Thomas. George does more than shadow his son; like a dragon he roars in and out of his life wreaking emotional havoc, casting a light which makes his son's life appear lukewarm, shabby and somehow shameful. Here, in **Running to Paradise**, we see how the price of George's passions, George's famous instincts, has been fully paid by his scattered family, as the younger son searches among the debris that is father/home for some philisophy, some epiphany, something to show that all was not misery, misadventure and mistake. George, the inveterate list-maker, leaves among his effects a diary of his visits to Coppinger, the boarding school-orphanage his sons attended while he continued his pursuit of happiness or flight from despair: 'The two boys came running out to meet me . . .' This rock of love between father and son is brought to the surface again and again by Arnold in a novel which mirrors the character of George: repetitive, at times sentimental and melodramatic, always passionate, always moving. *Paradise* is a beautiful, brilliantly executed story; as final part of the quartet its cumulative effect is considerable. Arnold is unfashionably straightforward, gentle, honest, sure-footed, fluent. There are no tricks up his sleeve, but his power to move is such that a mere flick of his wrist can make one care. Like its predecessors *Paradise* is sure, powerful and true.

Narayan's **A Tiger for Malgudi** is a tiger's tale. Raja, toothless now and rather deaf, reminisces from his final home, the zoo, about his life as a jungle despot, circus star-turn, reluctant film star, guru's companion and confidant. His ferocious look, as he paces the cage, belies a wealth of enlightened understanding, acquired through suffering and despair. Through misadventure Raja becomes part of the human world, which he finds baffling, brutal and ridiculous. Captured by the circus he doesn't know 'how to be a good boy', is robbed of his dignity, terrorised by a simple chair to jump through fire, sip milk with a goat. Hired to star with Jaggu, a big thickie in a leopard skin, he escapes from filming to take refuge in a school for forty winks in the headmaster's study.

Narayan is at his best here, displaying humanity, without hostility, at its most devious and daft. The head crouches in a loft leaving the 'acting head' – a wonderful character, mixture of ambition and 'cowardy-custard' – in a dilemma he attempts to resolve through dreadful waffle and retreat into jargon: defending the existence of the cane, explaining the school's inability to 'requisition' a ladder. Raja is claimed by a guru for philosophical reverie beyond the town until despatched, for his own safety, to the final security of the cage. Narayan has a deft, fine touch. His theme, man's smug, foolhardy and essentially fragile arrogance, is illuminated in gentle comedy and skilful language, a style which makes simplicity appear deceptively easy.

Coming from Behind, the story of Sefton Goldberg, how he came to be employed by Wrottesley Poly (more breeze-block than red brick) and how he tries to extricate himself from it, is a campus novel which goes some way to prove that the old jokes are still funny. Goldberg is an attractive failure: *goyim* make him nervous, teaching makes him sick, as a writer he can be only briefly consoled by the 'tragic aeroplane crash killing twenty of the world's most popular novelists'.

Jacobson can't resist a joke or a character sketch, so the book is less like a novel than a circus full of good acts between a cliché beginning and a rather poor finale. Nevertheless, Wrottesley and its staff, particularly the 'damp and pluvious' English Department to which Goldberg belongs, are endearingly familiar. Now operating from a broom cupboard, freshly labelled 'Department of 20c. Studies', they remain 'the same tired collection of sentimental grammar school boys with indifferent degrees and a hostility towards advertising, enthusiastic readers of contemporary Irish poetry who lamented the passing of open-air markets and T.F. Powys . . .' □

MADAME BLAVATSKY

Why were, and are, so many people, by way of books and articles, so concerned to besmirch her reputation, to prove her a fraud, and to denigrate her works? Is it because they are afraid? Does what she had to say undermine the "authority" of our highest institutions? Is "orthodoxy" fearful of the searchlight of her encyclopaedic knowledge and powerful intellect? Is it that academic vested interest must discredit her to maintain its own position? You can only find this out by reading her works for yourself. We suggest you would never be sorry if you did!

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DANCE
Stephanie Jordan

Huge steps

IN MEMORY of Dame Marie Rambert who died aged 94 a year ago, the latest Ballet Rambert season at Sadler's Wells contains fascinating recollections of fine moments from its past. (Rambert founded it in 1926.) Proof, too, of an energetic present is the relaunching of the Rambert School, which will feed the company, and the presentation of a repertoire that is the most wide-ranging of any of our native companies.

Glimpses of the past begin with *L'Après-midi d'un faune*, the only surviving piece by Nijinsky, a reminder of Rambert's important connection with that historic figure and the Diaghilev company. It is a work closely associated with her, since, for many years, Ballet Rambert kept it alive. No other work approaches its extraordinary mixture of primitive-Greek, frieze-like action with the supple ruminations of Debussy's score. Bakst's costumes are here supported by John Campbell's new set designs, a rather more autumnal Attic landscape than the original. Christopher Bruce, once coached by Rambert to be the definitive *faune* of his generation, returned from retirement to restage and dance it with understanding.

Next comes Rambert's association with Frederick Ashton, whom she discovered and nurtured for a decade before he transferred to the larger Vic-Wells Ballet with Ninette de Valois. For the fiftieth birthday performance of Ballet Rambert, Ashton dedicated a set of *Five Brahms Waltzes in the Manner of Isadora Duncan* to Rambert. Now they have been staged by the original exponent, Lynn Seymour. Lucy Burge, the company's noted dramatic dancer, is compelling as a solo figure moved by her music, though I missed the element of languor with which Seymour refined her interpretation. I would not venture to suggest which of the two was more like Duncan.

More interesting is the revival of *Capriol Suite* created by Ashton in 1930 for the then Marie Rambert Dancers; you cannot go further back in Ashton's career than that. To Peter Warlock's string arrangement of 16th-century dance tunes from Arbeau's *Orchesography*, it is an affectionately wicked glance at Renaissance styles from a popular 20th-century viewpoint, rather than an attempted recreation of the real thing. Already, we note Ashton's skill in presenting manners, customs and humour with control: the stylised histrionics of the courtiers in the fanciful Pavane and, elsewhere, the straightforward exuberance of the more lowly; he finds any amount of wit in a classical or eccentrically modified classical vocabulary.

It is a huge step from *Capriol Suite* to

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Walker and Bruce in *Faune*

Fielding Sixes, the first work by the great American experimentalist Merce Cunningham to venture into the British repertory. In fact, the Rambert dancers can be proud to have their very own version of the original 1980 work, for Cunningham's assistant, Chris Komar, has artfully rearranged the piece, setting it for a dozen dancers instead of 13 and suggesting that the dancers keep their customary shoes on instead of working barefoot. Mark Lancaster has rethought the designs; the dancers wear individual bright colours.

The result is a fantasia of irregular steps and patterns, some heel-and-toe and folksy, lace all over the stage-floor, directional changes. While the dancers work blithely at their conversational exchanges, John Cage's Irish fiddle music, multi-tracked and indeterminately manipulated in speed and volume, provides anything from noisy counter-rhythms to a nostalgic murmur or even silence.

Sixes is a wise choice for Rambert. From the Cunningham company's performance, I remember it having a friendly grace combined with daredevil speed. The Rambert dancers, though more lyrical and gentle than their American model, fully meet the demands of rhythmic precision, unpretentious performing personae and individual attention to the clearest possible presentation of the dance material itself.

Much of Richard Alston's work in the past has betrayed his admiration for Cunningham, but, in his recent *Apollo Distraught* and his new *Chicago Brass*, his rethinking and remoulding of what he has absorbed from Balanchine is more evident. Certainly, *Chicago Brass* looks superficially more like a classical ballet than anything that the versatile Ballet Rambert performs at present, and, like Balanchine's work, it is essentially commentary on the music, playing with the rhythms, structure and individual sonorities of Hindemith's *Konzertmusik* for piano, brass and harps. Three pairs of soloists are shared between four movements, the dancers allowed an independence to team up in many different ways.

The volatile, athletic and open-chested work for Catherine Price, Hugh Craig and the other men is the most like Balanchine in style but the analogy can stretch only so far. Lyrical, more peaceful sections make their distinctive statement in the ballet: the opening double-duet for Mary Evelyn, Diane Walker, Robert North and Paul Melis, and the long soliloquy for Diane Walker, like a meditation on reliving or reordering experience.

At the end of the work, the contrasts are reconciled. The clarity and simplicity of the opening, dispelled in the central movements, is reinstated, asserted more strongly than ever, by the end in a trio formation triplicated across the stage.

Alston is clearly thrilled with classical vocabulary, its speed, line, possibilities for intricacy as well as grand scale, and the potential for tableau and stability that rests within it. The Rambert dancers are unused to performing that vocabulary but Alston is seeing how far he can stretch them – indeed, outright classical dancers would feel exposed in some of these passages. Besides, there is considerable room for the intimacy and quiet presence to which his dancers here have more ready access.

More assurance is still needed from the cast, but Price has gained confidence since earlier performances in the regions, the men, mostly young or recent recruits and light and easy in style, are looking more like a community that can interlock and diverge freely without losing a common rhythm; Walker is beginning to sustain the continuity of her lonely solo.

Each new Alston work is a genuine step forwards, not a revamping of his earlier ideas. Sometimes the progression from one work to the next has been startling, but *Chicago Brass* clarifies this choreographer's direction and we look forward to what must surely follow.

A recent highlight of the Royal Ballet season was the performance of *La Fille mal gardée* led by Lesley Collier and Peter Schaufuss. Ashton's thorough renovation of the 18th-century classic is, in any case, brimful with wonderful moments, dances that are gems and acute observations. The pair of bright young lovers who in the end get the better of the difficult but lovable Widow Simone and the daft neighbours who pose a conflicting match, are all handled with the sympathetic wit that Ashton had hinted at 30 years earlier in *Capriol Suite*. Collier danced Lise brilliantly and generously. Schaufuss, whom we have rarely seen in this ballet, and never with the RB, is a gentle Colas, always ready for a lark, but serious enough to understate his own virtuosity and graciously modulate his energy. Even in solos, the impression is one of joy in their rapport rather than of grasping an opportunity for self-display.

Last Sunday at Sadler's Wells, dancers ranging from the most classical of classicists to those in established modern dance companies, to independent experimentalists and mime artists united in the benefit 'Dancing for Riverside'. It's perhaps the first time that such a diverse group has been assembled. But it is a sign of the singular national importance of Riverside's dance programme and of wide support for the venue so often threatened with closure during the last year. The house was crammed to the exits, the programme a fast-moving tour of today's multi-cultural dance scene also serving as a showcase for pieces that undoubtedly would never have reached such a wide audience. □

FILMS
John Coleman

Shrunk

Lovesick (15)
Warner; selected cinemas
Jean Gabin Season
NFT, 5-28 April

Previously known as co-author of Woody Allen movies, Marshall Brickman directed his own gag-strewn first, *Simon*, in 1980. Before a last nose-dive into treacle, this debut toyed promisingly with the notion of Alan Arkin conned by some nutty think-tankers into believing himself an extra-terrestrial. Now we have **Lovesick**, billed as 'a comedy for the incurably romantic', featuring cuddly Dudley Moore and Elizabeth McGovern, written as if on the back of a Freudian slip and directed as if from a couch: a resoundingly dropped Brickman. The small but perfectly formed Mr Moore is once again ill-starred, this time as a brilliant Manhattan psychiatrist, Saul, who unprofessionally falls for and beds a patient, the delicious young playwright Chloe (Ms McGovern, so myopically sexy as Evelyn Nesbit in *Ragtime*). Saul's fantasies tend to the Edwardian-nostalgic TV commercial kind, white-garbed picnics on greensward by water, but stretch to embrace a few visitations from Sir Alec Guinness as old Sigmund. Actually, whether by whim or mismanagement, this Freud's figmentary status is left dubious: we see him a couple of times when Saul is elsewhere.

But everything is bewilderingly unfocussed in this kitsch and limping little film, with its tea-dance score and its glimpses of Saul's funny-weirdo patients and its easy award of a lover to Saul's wife to remove any flavour of guilt. John Huston is usefully to

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hand too, not merely as Mr Moore's mentor when he is accused of misconduct but also to snore for us as the Saul-character – quite seriously – goes into a spiel about 'a slow quiet death of the soul'. Saul doubts, do you see, the efficacy of what he is up to (as well he might, given the eccentric and slapdash treatment he dishes out) and his on-off-on affair with super Chloe is his lovely escape. The world of 50-minute hours is well lost as the pair wander off, arms enlaced, through a nocturnal park. It could just be that Mr Brickman intended a satire on contemporary shrinks, one hazards. 'I never meant it to become an industry', explains Guinness-Freud, lighting out for Mexico. Maybe this Manhattan concoction – a stirring of farce and romance, one-liners and more than a dash of urban angst – carried a kick Stateside. I'd settle for Horlicks.

Gabin, *the* French film actor for some of us, with that stoic seam of a mouth, eyes that stared with a haunted, hunted truculence, is being celebrated, along with the legendary men who directed him, out on the South Bank. Unmissable. □

TELEVISION
Hugo Williams

Orange juice

CHASE the Devil (C4), Jeremy Marre's fine documentary about religious music in the Appalachians, showed how the mountain folk use the devil's music to chase out the devil. It's a kind of white mountain blues bequeathed to these coalmining folk by the more progressive black culture, and it has undertones of voodoo. 'God's gonna move for yer, honey', hollers Rev Joe Freeman, laying hands on a beehived believer. She starts in a-jerkin' in the approved style, then she falls down a-jerkin'. Someone tucks in her shirt. 'Anyone else wanna touch from God step right on up', cries Joe, who likes to be known as 'God's little Elvis'. He sings a rock-tinged 'Wake me shake me Jesus' and his own 'There'll be no Black Lung up in Heaven'. We see these exiles from the 20th century twisting their anguished English faces as they grapple with concepts of God and the devil, their wretched lives leading them more often up the valley to the Honky Tonk – fast women and strong drink – than down to the New River for full immersion.

Roy Gunter, hardline mountain puritan, never says a word, except to his car aerial, the last functioning thing in his run-down domain. 'This switch', he explains, referring to the aerial, 'is filled with the spirit of God. Fast women is the great threat to our religion. You don't approve of it, do you God?' The switch nods its head. 'Thou shalt praise the Lord with strange instruments', says Larry Richardson, quoting from the Bible which he uses as 'a road map'. Larry is three times world banjo champion – the instrument is apparently built for speed – but he's forsaken the 'false pride' of Nashville and now only plays as far as Herb's Christian Diner. Some mountain folk take their road-map even more literally, proclaiming their faith by swigging carbon tetrachloride and handling snakes. Like any good reporter, Marre is there when one of the handlers has been bitten: 'If he dies it will be in the service of the Lord, fighting the devil.' Slim pulls through, but Jimmy, the spokesman, dies of strychnine, wrestling with the devil in the shape of his own stupidity.

HOW LUCKY the English are to have America to go and make documentaries in. It's so weird over there all you have to do is set up your camera and shield your eyes from the consequences. The 'New Right' is pure television. It should be called 'The New Kitsch'. 'It's time for God's people to come out of the claw-zit', shrilled one enthusiast on C4's **A Burning Issue,** offering us the relevant image of New Righters doing New Rightish things to each other *inside* the claw-zit, where, of course, they will have to remain. As Gore Vidal pointed out, 'These poor people in their small towns are completely cut off from western culture. They say to burn our books, but they don't have any books to burn.'

Gastank, hosted by the Liberace of rock, Rick Wakeman, diamonds aglitter, tries sorely for devil country. It's the place (C4) where old rock stars go to play their last wee-wee solos on earth. We decided, on balance, that it must be going out live, as the boys would have stopped it if they'd had the opportunity. 'What can you say about Bauhaus 7', asked Graham Fletcher, introducing that band on **Switch,** C4's follow-up to *The Tube,* the serious teen music show. He couldn't think of anything. Remember high energy? *Switch* isn't it, but it beats **Top of the Pops** (BBC-1) which is firmly out of the McCartney-God-Cliff-Richard side of the family. A recent edition of TOTP popped up on Wednesday, which is like saying Sunday was on Saturday last week; not that I like the show, but it's traditional in our house, like Christmas. I usually meet my family there for insults and cereal. 'Hello, I hope you're feeling fine', sang the virginal Nick Heywood; 'Hello, I hope you're feeling mine.' Traditional zoom in on bass guitar as lead takes a solo. Where do we go from here, Nick ? Down to the lake, I fear. Orange Juice is a typically insipid TOTP group name and they do a typically insipid little TOTP tune called 'Rip It Up' which gains nothing from not being the Little Richard song of that name.

After them, David Bowie did a gig for some aborigines in an outback 'hotel'; he seemed to pass the audition. 'Tomorrow night you'll hear him going on and on and on on Radio One', said John Peel, very un-TOTP-ishly. I tuned in as Bowie was declaring a revival of r 'n' b. This seems to happen regularly in the third year of every decade. If it's on its way it's none too soon to revive the corpse of British Pop which has little but orange juice in its veins. □

THEATRE
Benedict Nightingale

Bad new world

Victory
HOWARD BARKER *Royal Court*
The Fourth Wall
DARIO FO and FRANCA RAME *Drill Hall*
Mr Puntila and his Servant Matti
BRECHT *Tricycle*

It is of course axiomatic that playwrights whose first names are Howard use their plays as cattle-prods, weapons with which to sting and shock the socially and politically bovine. Not that Barker's **Victory** is likely to cause as great a stir as Brenton's *Romans,* especially since it is staged at the Royal Court, where a scathing contempt for establishment authority is *de rigueur* and scabrous language, even the weird sort of four-letter baroque we get here, is perfectly acceptable. But that theatre's PR complex tells me that, when the Joint Stock Company made the curious decision to take the play to Cheltenham recently, the result was disapproval, dudgeon, and the sound of sensible shoes stomping out of the exit doors; and one can see why. Here's Charles II, the 'mad shagman', celebrating his return to the London fleshpots by compulsively humping women, the language, anyone and anything. Here's Nell Gwynne french-kissing the rotting head of Bradshaw, the regicide dug up and dismembered as part of the post-Restoration reprisals and festivities. Here's torture and sexual abuse, decadence and violence, and all else you'd expect of a Howard dealing with the corrupt aftermath of one of the few historical times of which Howards tend to approve.

It is a pustular, inventive, coarse, lurid, ebullient and really rather interesting play, covering the same period as Bond's *Restoration* but much more in the style of his *Early Morning.* The main character is Bradshaw's widow, who treks to London in search of the odds and ends of her husband that are being displayed on gates, bridges and the king's pillow. She finds them, too; but only after being reduced to beggary, raped by a randy Cavalier named Ball, briefly engaged as housekeeper by a royal trollop, and, in a final climax, confronted with the sight of the raging Ball murdering the banker-husband that Charles is foisting upon her employer. This particular incident, I should explain, is by no means as random as it may sound. Barker, like Ball, is looking for enemies and, like him, finds them in the money-men of the Bank of England. They would appear to have got rid of the fiscally importunate Charles I, brought about the Restoration when the commonwealth became unprofitable, and are now the real rulers of the land, grudgingly recognised as such by their gaudy puppet on the British throne. For

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Ball, for Barker, some retribution is clearly necessary.

Barker's view of history is over-simple, to say the least; but simplicity is not the impression left by the play as a whole. It is subtitled 'choices in reaction' and shows the characters making several such. Ball's death-blow is actually a desperate, doomed attempt to restore the monarchy he fought for: 'Charles Stuart, be a king!'. Charles's obsessive sex-athleticism is, at least in part, his rather pathetic way of compensating for his political impotence. Milton appears, to recommend a ceaseless series of bloody revolutions as the only means of preventing that clod, man, from institutionalising his awfulness. Mrs Bradshaw is a more interesting case, because a bad new world transforms her from a conscientious republican into a woman prepared to cheat her comrades, grovel to her enemies, exploit the already oppressed, and generally make any accommodation in order to survive and play Antigone to her husband's remains. But the most original piece of characterisation in a play that often and deliberately lurches into caricature is her companion and Bradshaw's ex-secretary: at first a flustered, bleating ninny, for ever throwing up his hands in genteel anguish at the erosion of a moral and political faith he is too cowardly to stand up for himself; as it turns out, someone capable of bawling 'long live the commonwealth of equals' from somewhere inside a face sliced apart by Charles's praetorian guard.

As this suggests, Barker hasn't quite succumbed to that despair, that near-nihilism, which so often seems to afflict left-wing dramatists when they consider that past, present and future disaster-zone, England. Defiance persists. There is also the example of Bradshaw's daughter, who, while her mother is off feverishly (and, for Barker, pretty pointlessly) collecting her dead husband's offal, has been ensuring that the red meat of his ideas finds its way into print. People will presumably be able to read his views on those who exploit either the labour of others or (the play's subsidiary interest and emphasis) the relationship between the sexes. Britain may on the whole be a moral cesspit created by the hard-nosed for the hare-brained to flounder in; but there is, it seems, the odd glimmer in the murk. Julie Covington, crisp, direct and by no means unsympathetic, leads Danny Boyle's admirable cast, which also includes Nigel Terry, Eleanor David and Toby Salaman.

The cast of **The Fourth Wall** consists of just Paola Dionisotti and Maggie Nicols, giving their all to four monologues which (alas) tend to prove that, if Signor and Signora Fo's inimitable humour is extracted, their essays in political warfare tend to become a bit ordinary. There are, however, moments of power in their outrage at the maltreatment of Baader-Meinhof prisoners, notably Ulrike herself. And **Puntila** tends to prove that Brecht, while thinking internationally, could write pretty Germanically. Still, prolix and not-very-funny passages don't prevent Barry Stanton making a splendid, splenetic impact as the exemplary capitalist who is generous when drunk, vicious when sober, and never to be trusted. □

ART
John Spurling

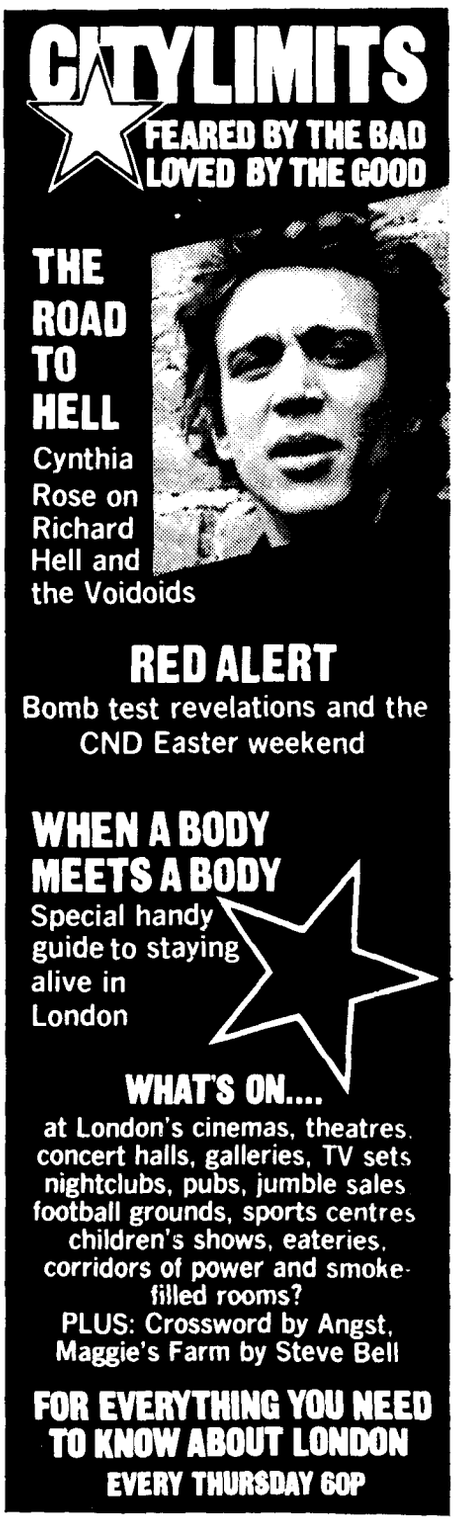
St Raphael

RAPHAEL, the Mozart of painters, was born on Good Friday 500 years ago (6 April 1483) and died 37 years later, also on Good Friday. His reputation was so formidable – Vasari called him a 'mortal god', David Thompson (see below) calls him 'the most idolised, the most beloved painter in the whole history of art' – and his influence is so powerful and persistent that he had become by the 19th century an academic monument which was more of a hindrance than a help to aspiring artists. His unique blend of classical manner and Christian subject-matter with Renaissance humanism, the beauty, grace and intelligence of his work, as apparently also of his character, made him a model of moral perfection, almost a saint, to such earnest 19th-century souls as the German Nazarenes, Prince Albert and William Dyce, whose fresco *Neptune Resigning to Britannia the Empire of the Sea* at Osborne House was closely based on Raphael's *Triumph of Galatea* and thus, as it were, adopted Raphael's transcendent moral authority for Victoria's Empire. In the end there was nothing for it but to try to ignore the monument and neglect his works.

The attempt has been quite successful. The Ashmolean at Oxford, which holds the largest collection of Raphael drawings in the world, celebrated his quincentenary by exhibiting them all, but the exhibition ended a month ago. The BBC's timing is better. Starting on April 6 itself and continuing at weekly intervals, BBC-2 is showing three splendidly detailed programmes by David Thompson, the most sensitive maker of art films in the business. The first covers Raphael's early period from his birth in Urbino to the time in Florence when he was picking up ideas from Leonardo and Michelangelo; the second deals with the last 12 years in Rome working for the Vatican as architect and Commissary of Antiquities as well as painter; the third with his posthumous influence. But, if it were not for the Ashmolean and the BBC, the quincentenary would pass unremarked and the best I can do is to urge you to create your own celebration by visiting the National Gallery, where there are eight Raphaels (mostly early), the National Gallery of Scotland, where there are two (also early), and the V & A for the seven cartoons which Raphael made towards the end of his life for the Sistine Chapel tapestries. Dulwich College Chapel contains a copy of his last work, *The Transfiguration*.

As it happens there are three Raphael drawings on show at the BM, which is acting as host to two outstanding collections of Old Master drawings. The Raphaels belong to the Lugt Collection from the Institut Néerlandais from Paris, represented here by 130 or so Italian drawings, including a particularly lively group by Guercino. One of them is a double portrait of a man and woman sitting at a table; the man is turned away up left, while the woman, her face half-covered by her hand, miserably drawn into herself, faces down right. The drawing might have been done by an Impressionist, the scene might have been witnessed in any café since cafés were invented.

It would be unfair to point out that there are no Raphael drawings either on show or behind scenes in the V & A's newly opened Henry Cole wing, since there is so much else. Converted from its former role as part of the Imperial College of Defence in order to house the V & A's Department of Prints,


CITYLIMITS
FEARED BY THE BAD
LOVED BY THE GOOD
THE ROAD TO HELL
Cynthia Rose on Richard Hell and the Voidoids
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Bomb test revelations and the CND Easter weekend
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Drawings, Photographs and Paintings, the building has six floors and is currently displaying some dozen different exhibitions, temporary or permanent, of which the most immediately welcome is the unrivalled collection of oil sketches by Constable on the top floor. Here at last, in space and daylight, one can get the full measure of his scope, variety and tenacity. It is an extra, if unworthy pleasure for the Constable partisan to find in a room beyond, labelled 'Constable's Rivals and Emulators', two paintings by Turner.

Raphael, according to Vasari, was such a good man that even his assistants 'began to live in a state of natural harmony and agreement'. Not his rival Michelangelo, though, who, upstaged under his own Sistine ceiling by those brilliant tapestries, persuaded Vasari to alter a passage in his *Life of Raphael* so as to put down Raphael's studied art by comparison with Michelangelo's own intuitive genius: 'When a style is adequate, it should not be strained by efforts to surpass the efforts of men who, by virtue of great natural talent and grace given to them by God, have performed, or are performing, artistic miracles'. □

WEEKEND COMPETITION

No 2764 **Set by A. Boteman**

Ballet never seems to have much to do with politics these days; remedy this, please, with an extract from a a ballet synopsis based upon some modern political story – the founding of the SDP, the Militant affair, the Darlington by-election, and so on. Up to 140 words, by 15 April.

No 2761 **Set by P. W.R. Foot**

Nursery rhymes *de nos jours*.

Report **By Toby Jugge**

Delicious. Five quid a shot.

Nobby Tebbit's on a spree,
Silver bike clips at his knee,
He's employed, so why aren't we?
  Bonny Nobby Tebbit.
Nobby Tebbit's stern and grim,
You will get no change from him,
You may sink but he can swim.
  Bonny Nobby Tebbit.

JAN RUT-BROWN

Mary Whitehouse

Mary, Mary, quite contrary,
How does your garden grow?
With fig-leaves, nuts, and tut-tut-tuts,
And little maids all saying 'NO!'

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

Aga Scarga
Coker Coaler
Yorkie talkie
Lucky strike.
Pitter patter
Mynah birdie
Old MacGregor
On his bike.

WILL BELLENGER

Hickety-pickety, my Red Ken
Likes to talk to Irishmen.
Oh fares go up and fares go down,
But he's the King of London Town.

GEORGE SIMMERS

Sing a song of pranksters,
A randy lot, and stark;
Four-and-twenty corridors
To run through in the dark.
When the gaff was blown, the
World could share the fun . . .
Wasn't that a lovely scoop
To publish in the *Sun*?

MOYRA BLYTH

Every boy and every girl,
Every Roy and every Shirl,
And every earl and every churl
Ate some Yesty Peas.
Rodgers all and all the Daves,
Codgers all and all the knaves,
And all their slaves can rule the waves
Down the Burman Sea.

GILL BREENLLEW

Fagan, Fagan, where have you been?
'I climbed up the palace to look at the queen.'
Fagan, Fagan, what did you there?
'I counted the curlers that grew in her hair.'

FIONA PITT-KETHLEY

Jack and Jill came off the Pill
Because they felt they oughter.
That rang the bell,
Jill quickly fell
And had a baby daughter.

So Jack saw sense and off he went
To have an operation.
Said he, 'That's it,
I've done my bit.
I'm through with procreation.'

HAZEL STANLEY

Bermondsey

The grand old man of the Left
He had some tricky men;
He knocked them down when they grew too daft,
Then he picked them up again.
And when they were down they were up,
And when they were up they were down,
For it's not much cop to be offered a pup
That its master's planned to drown.

MARY HOLTBY

Andy flew a chopper,
Andy had a whopper,
Andy won a battle with a rattle of his gun.
All the nosey parkers
Tried to see Koo Starkers,
Chasing Randy Andy in the Caribbean sun.

BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

The Howe and the Margaret went to sea
In a beautiful true-blue boat;
And with the cry: 'No wets! We're dry!'
They tried to keep it afloat.
With mad Sir Keith they carved up Heath
And threw his remains on the deck;
Soon their only crew was The Tebbit, who
Had a bolt through the back of his neck.

A. HARRADEN

Here am I, little Princess Di,
If you're from the *Sun*, then I'll poke you in the eye.
If you're from the *Telegraph*, that's all right,
But if it's the *New Statesman* – well, goodnight!

GEORGE EASTHILL

FIRST PERSON

William Boyd

Lost in the wastes

SOME SEVEN YEARS ago I came to Oxford to write a Ph.D. thesis (or D.Phil., as they call it here). Now I'm on the point of leaving the place and the thesis is still not complete. It's 'nearly finished', 'almost done'. I'm caught fast in that curious limbo, the scholarly transit lounge which will be so depressingly familiar to those who have ever embarked on a similar enterprise. Two hundred pages typed, the rest in draft. All that's required is another six months collating, footnote arranging, and the ruthless eradication of error.

Marathon runners, I believe, hit something called 'the wall' two-thirds of the way through their 26 miles, a mental and physical crisis point through which they must pass if they're ever to complete the course. There ought to be a similar expression for the thesis-writer: the tundra, say, the rock escarpment, the 'wastes'. Well, I'm lost in the Wastes, the third and potentially most dangerous stage in thesis-writing. You've gone far too far to jack the thing in, but your destination's still a long way off. Everything around you seems stale, flat and unprofitable, and the thought of gamely pushing on brings debilitating attacks of nausea.

Most people writing Eng. Lit. theses in Oxford work in a place called the upper reading room in the Bodleian Library. This airy venerable top floor takes on almost numinous qualities after a while. It gets *so* familiar, you know every face, you seem to have lived there all your life. But to the stranger, the new boy, it is daunting. You walk down the long aisles desperately trying to resist the temptation to rearrange you hair, achingly conscious of the clamorous squeak in your shoes. Everybody looks at you, you are the cynosure of all eyes until you gain your desk. Covertly you look around. My God, these people are serious, you think. Not a smile, just a field of furrowed brows. And, good grief, they're all working so *hard!*

Massive self-doubt sets in; critical revaluations of one's intellectual credentials are guiltily undergone. All these books to read, all those subsidised years ahead to fill. Can I hack it? Some people, you note with alarm, possess talismans to help them through. A very high-cheekboned youth draws inspiration from a picture of Virginia Woolf propped in front of him; someone else has a perfect rose at her elbow each day or a favourite teddy bear. Who are these types, you think? Let me out of here.

It wears off quickly enough, I'm glad to say. The upper reading room becomes the

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place you hang out between coffee breaks. You get to know the characters, the personalities, the total prats. There's the paper thief and the incurable, chronic sniffers; the drummers – that biro's sure got rhythm – and the ones with terrible BO. There are the lounge lizards and the lechers, the nutters and the all too rare beauties. All human life is there, to coin a phrase.

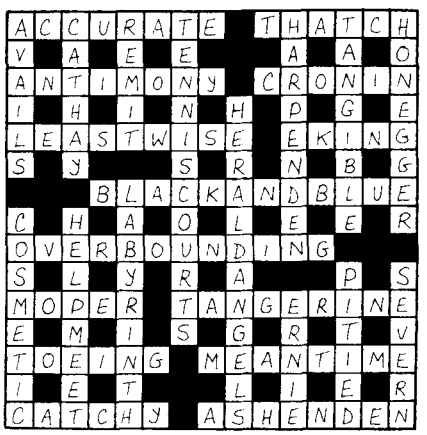
I worked on staking my claim to a slice of Shelley and steadily progressed. I handed in my chapters and got through a lot of reading before I hit the first barrier the thesis-writer encounters. It's not quite the dark night of the soul you experience when you enter the Wastes, but all the same it's a serious check. It's called having no money. When the money runs out, when the grant dries after three years, the thesis has rarely advanced beyond the half-way stage. Here you confront the second obstacle: the double bind. You go to work to buy the time to write the thesis. Work usually means teaching. But the work you do to enable you to have the time to write your thesis takes up too much time. The pace slows to a crawl. From here on in it's a struggle all the way. The Wastes lie up ahead. My only advice is finish soon.

I don't have any regrets at all about the time I spent on my thesis. I learnt a lot. I learnt a lot about Shelley too. The Bodleian possesses huge amounts of Shelley manuscripts, notebooks, letters etc. I spent hundreds of hours happily sifting through these, and it was among them that I made my greatest discovery, my unique contribution to scholarship.

Shelley was a great doodler. The margins of his manuscripts are often filled with cute little drawings, many of which have been reproduced. They seem almost too archetypally Shelleyan: laughing nymphs, lakes, wooded islands, yachts and boats. One day I was leafing through a file containing loose pages of manuscript and various notebooks. In one folder, in between some speculations on Democritus' age and some vague chat about Love animating spirits I came across a curious full-page drawing. At first I couldn't make it out, then I turned it upside down. It was a life-size cock and balls, drawn with all the attention to detail of a bog-door graffitist. Wow, I thought, this is it! This is going to revolutionise Shelley studies. The fey blond poet of popular legend will be gone for ever.

The plan was to reproduce it as the frontispiece to my thesis, and though I told people about my discovery I always kept the Bodleian catalogue number a closely guarded secret. But as the Wastes grow more wearisome it seems unnecessarily selfish to deny you a glimpse of the obscene Shelley graffito. So here it is, a world exclusive, published for the first time ever – *Bod. Ms. Shelley adds. c.4 folder 24!!!* My immortality in somebody else's footnote. □

Solution to 1394



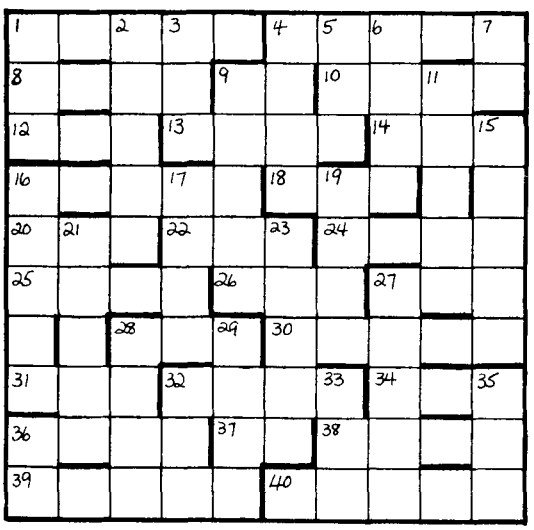
Prizewinners to 1394

D. L. L. Clarke (Oxford)
Marian E. Davies (Macclesfield)
David Linnell (Loughton, Essex)

Salamanca 67

'1-2-3'

PRIZES: £25 cheques for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Salamanca 67, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 3 May.



Each square can contain three letters or less, so that in the completed puzzle all squares are filled. Six unclued answers may be split into two categories. All clued words (except 28D) are in Chambers.

Name_____

Address_____

_____

_____

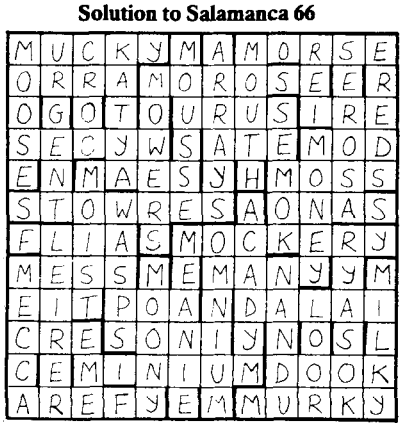
ACROSS

1 Sash (sic), not used in this form (7)
4 Prince, young and of Spain (7)
8 I see one with length round about edge of eaves? (6)
9 Many voice the last part internally (2 words, 4)
12 Man with award for old bullet wound? (5)
13 Not exactly minute, nor has it zero mass? (Quite the opposite) (8)
16 Part of the animal kingdom prevalent by the river and in the grasses (8)
18 Aboriginal Incas in wild state (5)
20 Begin in street that's cordoned off? (5)
22 Have a meal and take in bananas? (6)
24 The Lord's Supper served from a mangal (7)
25 Mineral following order of pearls (7)
26 Produce another? That will cover it (3)
27 Final demand for telephone? (4)
28 Month – that could be three years in Irish? (5)
30 Parades seen time and time again during emergency (8)
32 Like Shakespeare's book about a king and a princess imprisoned? (6)
34 Disease keeping clear of silence (6)
36 This clue I see in clouds of gnats (8)
37 I ape –, making it in pale way? (5)
39 Acted like dog having urge to go into garden? (6)
40 Arrived without one's shirt (6)

DOWN

2 Parasitic'd possibly tip this worm (7)
3 Showy flowers not seen about in quiet time (6)
4 Genuine essential (9)
5 Healing mud at thermal spring – hearing about it, would a – –? (5)
6 Good chap to have short cart in marketplace (6)
7 Response among the chorus (4)
9 To clue 'Rana', say, as 'to the death', wrongly (2 words, 10)
11 Long gold shiner that all can see rising? That's not normal (7)
15 Any sphere that's rather large, used as an oil-flask (9)
16 Invoice made out by poor farm (2 words, 8)
19 Fruit (must be peeled?) (5)
21 Old baldy getting replica with gel for fixing (10)
23 Bright sun's up – get outside making this, fast! (7)
27 Beetle – colour's a rich tan (9)
28 For telling fortunes – throwing this in oriental country mostly done with gravity (2 words, 6)
29 This'll measure day that's drawn out (8)
32 Material, poor, say, for getting up (6)
33 Autocrat of such a monarchy (4)
35 Take this away from horse and it's lost (proverbially) (4)
36 Is it hard to solve mostly because it changes as parts are moved away? (4)

Solution to Salamanca 66



Theme: Mickey } Mouse
Minnie }

Prizewinners to Salamanca 66

Jean M. Gordon (Paris)
Mrs D. M. MacKinnon (Galashiels)
Mrs C. A. Rossington (Lincoln)

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CLASSIFICATION RESEARCH OFFICER

(Job Share, Permanent)

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In order that the system meets the needs of its users, the team is carrying out extensive fieldwork in a wide range of agencies and is using computers to process the data collected. The team is now embarking on the construction of a first outline.

The successful candidate will have training, experience or an interest in some of the following: the construction of classification systems and/or other information retrieval tools (e.g., thesauri); community information and advice work; research and report writing; organisational and communication skills; collective and team work.

The post is for 18 hours per week. Salary scale £7,014-£8,479 per annum plus £1,220 London Weighting and 5% non-pensionable supplement (part-time pro rata). Generous leave, superannuation scheme, LVs.

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The Society for Education in Film and Television – a small educational charity publishing a journal and running conferences – needs an Accountant (part-qualified ACCA Part 1 or equivalent) capable of advising quickly and clearly on finances. Would also run small office; typing essential. Will also consider person with considerable practical experience in book-keeping/management accounting. Salary **£7,500-£9,300** (×4 increments).
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Appointments

LONDON BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK

Research and Intelligence Officer (Policing Matters) AP5 £8,925 to £9,459

Southwark Council has recently set up a Police Sub-Committee to campaign for police accountability and take up issues of concern to the Council and local people.

We are now looking for an experienced researcher to assist in:

- *developing policies for the policing of Southwark*
- *examining questions of organisation and control and practices of the police in Southwark, and*
- *liaising with the community, local groups, the GLC and the police*

No particular qualifications are sought, but it will be important for applicants to demonstrate appropriate research experience, a knowledge of inner-city policing issues and the ability to work closely with the community. Experience in dealing with legal matters would be an advantage. The post is located within the Administrative Services Division of the Town Clerk's Department. Informal inquiries should be made to Paul Dimoldenberg, Senior Research and Intelligence Officer (Tel: 01-703 6311, ext 2039).

Southwark is an Equal Opportunity employer. Applications are welcome from candidates regardless of sex or ethnic origin and from registered disabled persons. Telephone 01-701 2870 (24-hour answering service) any time for an application form, or write, on a postcard, to: **The Personnel Officer, London Borough of Southwark, 25 Commercial Way, London SE15 6DG.** Please quote reference **NS/1/3671** and job title. Last date for receipt of completed Application Forms: **21-4-83.**

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LISTINGS

THURS 31 MAR

EASTER CND ACTION Blockade of gates Burghfield RDF (mixed) and Greenham Common (women only). **Org CND 01-263 0977.**

LONDON Gay Humanist Group debates with Metropolitan Community Church 'Do gays need God?' Public meeting. 7pm library Conway Hall, Red Lion Square. **Org Gay Humanist Group 0926-58450.**

HAMPSTEAD Public meeting 'For people not profits: Labour's plan for jobs'. Spkrs Ernie Roberts MP, Mike Cooley. John McDonnell. 8pm St George's Hall, Kingsgate Road (corner Hemstal Road), NW6. **Org Hampstead Labour Party.**

LONDON 'The war in Ireland: the socialist solution' public meeting. 8pm Prince Albert Pub, Wharfdale Road, Kings Cross, N1. **Org Socialist Party of Great Britain 01-622 3811.**

FRI 1 APR

EASTER CND ACTION 40,000 link arms from Burghfield to Greenham via Aldermaston (mixed). **Org CND 01-263 0977.**

SAT 2 APR

EASTER CND ACTION Glasgow Mass 'die-in'. Assemble 11am, George Square. **Org CND 041-442 6859.**

WED 6 APR

LONDON 'I'm not a racist but . . .' Preview of the new Workers Against Racism video. 3.30pm Brady Club, Hanbury Street, E1. Local speakers. Hire fee £5 from **WAR, c/o BM WAR, London WC1N 3XX (01-274 3951),** 33 mins, VHS colour cassette. **Org WAR.**

WEST LONDON The Mass Psychology of Thatcherism. Socialist Society special working and discn meeting. Introduction Jocelyn Chaplin. 7pm Methodist Church, Lancaster Road, W11. All welcome. **01-743 0827.**

THURS 7 APR

UPPER HEYFORD PEACE BLOCKADE. Can you help organise the creche for this action in June? Help with transport, food, toys, bedding, marquees etc. Open meeting 7.30pm. Room 180, County Hall, London SE1. **Enquiries Tim Brown 01-582 7375.**

LONDON Fight racism! Fight imperialism! (in South Africa) Public meeting 7.30pm Camden Centre, Bidborough Street, Euston Road (Kings Cross tube), NW1. Spkrs incl Jacob Hannai (SWAPO). **Org FRFI.**

LONDON Labour's economic programme. Discn introduced by Henry Neuberger and John Harrison, 8pm The Wheatsheaf, Rathbone Place, WC1. **Org Conference of Socialist Economists London Forum.**

FORTHCOMING

8-10 APR Days of Action at Daws Hill Peace Camp, High Wycombe, Bucks. **Contact Sean Hawkey, Bourne End 22624.**

8-10 APR Liverpool Conference on Teaching and Learning about Northern Ireland. Christ's College. **Org Peace Education Network. Details: Stefanie Duczek, 64 Monkgate, York 0904-51456.**

8-10 APR Cardiff Has work a future? Weekend conference on alternative strategies for work and education. **Org Foundation for Education with Production. Contact Linda Mansell, 28 Albany Road, Bath.**

9-10 APR London Solidarity with the Palestinian and Lebanese people. Two-day conference. British spkrs, spkrs from abroad & UN observers. 10-5.30pm County Hall, SE1. Credentials £1 per delegate from LIBERATION, 313 Caledonian Road, N1. **Org CRS London Political Committee/LIBERATION 01-607 0465.**

11 APR London 'Feminism in 19th Century England.' History Workshop Seminar. Spkr Ros Delmar. 7.30pm. Black Horse Pub, Rathbone Place, W1.

12-14 APR London International Conference on the Urban Transportation of Nuclear Fuels. Connaught Rooms, WC2. Free. Creche. Sponsored GLC. **Applications by 5 April to Patricia King-Smith, Technica, 11 John Street, WC1.**

13 APR for 2 weeks. Exhibition of children's work on peace. Adm free. Wood Green Central Library Foyer, N22. **Org Haringey Teachers for Peace. S. Neuling 01-883 1511.**

13 APR London The arms race and its implications for Europe. Talk by Frank Barnaby, ex-director SIPRI. 7pm Small Hall, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1. **Org London END.**

14 APR London Socialism and the women's movement. Public forum with Susan Ardill, Spare Rib, and Christine Moss. 8pm Prince Albert Pub, Wharfdale Road, Kings Cross, N1. **Org Socialist Party of Great Britain.**

16 APR London The Politics of Poverty – what future for the poor? Day conf. **Org CPAG 01-242 3225.**

16 APR Over our dead bodies; women against the bomb. Spkrs incl Julie Christie, Fay Weldon, Jill Tweedie, Jill Craigie, Susannah York. 3.30pm Central Hall, Westminster. Adm £1/50p unwaged. **Details: 01-379 6977, ext 241 or 253.**

16 APR Hastings. Robert Tressell Memorial Lecture: Robert Tressell and the Trade Unions in the 1980s. Spkr Norman Willis, Dep. Gen. Sec. TUC. 3pm White Rock Pavilion, Lower Hall. Adm free. **Org WEA Hastings Branch 0892 32354.**

19 APR Leicester. Alternative Defence. Talk by Michael Randel. 7.30pm Friends Meeting House, Queens Road. **Org Leicester CND 0533-57228.**

20 APR-11 MAY London. See Red Women's Workshop exhibition – 7 years of women's posters. Cockpit Gallery, Princeton Street, WC1. Opening party 21 Apr 6-8.30pm.

23 APR Leeds. Seminar on Psychological Aspects of the Nuclear Threat. 9.15-1pm. Clin. sci. Bldg, St James's Hospital. **Org North & West Yorks. Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons 0532 780274.**

23-24 APR Bradford Organise to survive. 2-day training seminar for CND groups with Dan Plesch. Peace Studies Centre, Bradford. **Org Bradford Nuclear Disarmament Group 0274-578199/601672.**

28 APR London Public meeting Greenham Common and Labour, Guest spkrs Helen John and Anne Cesek. 7.30pm Islington Central Library, Holloway Road. **Org Islington South & North Labour Parties.**

30 APR Poplar New Worker International May Day Celebration. Films, videos, folk groups, revolutionary singers, political rally, play. Bookstalls & refreshments. 2-11pm Poplar Civic Hall, Bow Road, E3. Adm £1/students, OAPs 50p. **Org New Worker newspaper.**

1 MAY Leeds Pavilion feminist photography centre opens. Photographic work still welcomed for open submission show on feminism and photography. Deadline for entries 30 May. Entries (with SAE) to 2 Chestnut Avenue, Leeds 6. **0532-787987.**

1 MAY London May Day Concert for Chile with Quilapayun and The Boys of the Lough. 7pm Dominion Theatre, Tottenham Court Road, W1. Tickets £4-£6/£2 unwaged. **Org Chile Solidarity Campaign 01-272 4298.**

6-8 MAY Reading. Women for Peace: weekend workshop. **Org Reading CND, PO Box 158, Reading, Berks (SAE please). 0734-61361.**

7 MAY Brockwell Park. Youth CND Festival. **Org CND 01-263 0977.**

9-14 MAY Berlin. Second European Nuclear Disarmament Convention. **Contact Russell Foundation, Gamble Street, Nottingham 0602-784504.**

14 MAY 'Crusade against cruise'. Long distance march Lands End to CND festival in Exeter via Truro, Plymouth etc. Adm £2 per day waged/£1 per day unwaged. **Org SW Region CND. Contact Stephen Huggett Plymouth 268724.**

14 MAY London The Jury Today. Day conf. Spkrs Prof Michael Zander, John Freeman JP, George Carman QC, Dr Michael McConville. ULU, Malet Street, WC1. £15. **Org Univ of London Dept of Extra-Mural Studies 01-636 8000 ext 3875.**

26 MAY London Public meeting Ireland & Labour. Guest Spkrs Ken Livingstone, Clive Soley. 7pm Islington Central Library, Holloway Road. **Org Islington South Labour Party.**

4 JUNE Leicester. Leicester Active Birth Conference. Day conference 9.30-4.30pm. £4.50/£2.50 unwaged. **Enquiries Janet Peacock 0533-766439.**

Sorry, but we can't accept entries over the phone. Entries must be received by Friday preceding issue date. We reserve the right to exclude items without giving reasons and are not responsible for errors. Space is strictly limited so if you definitely want your item to appear, we suggest you book it as an ad. under the appropriate classified heading. See main heading for rates, etc.

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THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for free pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Public Talk Sunday 3 April 8 p.m. 'Concentration, Meditation'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

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Publications

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